

The Nation.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1872.

The Week.

THERE has been great excitement among the brokers over the "corner" in "Northwestern Common" and the simultaneous arrest of Jay Gould for fraud by the Erie Railway, the corporation suing him for the enormous sum of \$9,726,541 26. The history of the case, in brief, is this: When Fisk and Gould got the Erie road into their hands, four years ago, Gould formed a partnership with three men, one of whom was Henry N. Smith, under the firm name of Smith, Gould, Martin & Co. The ostensible object of the partnership was banking and brokerage, but the main if not the only real design of the partners was to steal money from the Erie Railway. This they did in the simplest way, Fisk and Gould acting as the railway and issuing stock; the firm taking it and converting it into cash, and then dividing the proceeds; the transaction being wound up by fraudulent entries in the company's books. In short, Gould and his firm stole about \$10,000,000 from the road in an incredibly short space of time, and, together with Fisk, reduced the Erie treasury to such a condition that when the new board came in under the influence of the "Erie Reform" movement, the road was in a state of hopeless bankruptcy. Proceedings were immediately begun by the new President, Mr. Watson, an experienced railroad man, and the reform board of directors, to recover the stolen money, the company giving out that they were acting in good faith, others asserting that part of the arrangement by which they had obtained possession of the road from Gould was that the latter should be let off scot-free. The truth of the matter now turns out to be that Gould gave up the road to the reformers, as they supposed, unconditionally, but in reality he got, as *quid pro quo*, a release from the road of all claims against him from the beginning of the world down to the 31st of October, 1871. Of this release Mr. Watson and the counsel of the road had no knowledge at the time, and now disregard as worthless in law on account of fraud. Its existence may perhaps be explained by the fact that General Sickles acted as intermediary in the matter, and we hinted at it pretty broadly at the time.

Smith and Gould, as the way is among thieves, by-and-by fell out. Gould determined to ruin Smith, and Smith to ruin Gould. Both of them thought they saw in the stock of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad a good field of operations. The road, the stock of which is commonly known as "Northwestern," runs from Chicago to Omaha, and, with its connections, has about 1,600 miles of track. The common stock pays no dividends, and its ordinary market value is from 70 to 80. The number of shares in existence is not accurately known, but is supposed to be about 150,000. The importance of the road arises from the fact that it forms part of one of the highways from the Atlantic to the Pacific, being a link in a line of communication which takes in the Central and Union Pacific, the Lake Shore, and the New York Central. These roads, with the exception of the Central Pacific, the "Vanderbilt party" controls, and it was of course for their interest to obtain possession of the Northwestern line. For this purpose they determined to "corner" the stock, or, in other words, get possession of the road without paying for it; and to assist them in their undertaking, they formed an alliance with Gould, Gould's old pal, Smith, forming an alliance at the same time with Daniel Drew, to gamble on the other side for the simpler object of money and ruining their foes.

A "corner," we must explain, for the benefit of our less sinful readers; is an operation of this kind: A and his friends buy all the stock of a road, and having by this means forced the price to a high point, go on buying, or rather making contracts to buy, more and more

stock at the market rates, which gradually rise until they reach some extravagant figure, and then A and his friends, buyers, and B and his friends, sellers, draw off. Those who have contracted to deliver cannot do it, because they are "short" of the stock, having contracted to deliver twice as much perhaps as there is in existence. If they could deliver, the other side could not pay. The A party therefore says to the B party: "You see you are in a corner; you cannot deliver this stock; we cannot pay for it if you could; pay us so much for each share you have agreed to let us have, and we will cancel the contracts." The contracts are then settled at some rate agreed upon, the A party remains in control of the stock, which it has paid for with the proceeds of the cancellation of the contracts. This is a successful corner. The corner "breaks" and is unsuccessful when the cornering party has not money or pluck enough to go on to the end, but begins to settle or sell stock. Then the price falls, the "short" party are able to fulfil their contracts, and the cornerers are themselves cornered.

The corner has produced a wonderful amount of interviewing and of card-publishing, and some of the concomitants have been very amusing. One interviewer admits that, being "a discreet person," he took himself away with some speed from the office of Mr. Watson, the President of Erie, Mr. Watson having given him the mild intimation that if he, the reporter, had his suspicions that his, Mr. Watson's, lawyers, Messrs. S. L. M. Barlow, La Roque & Co., were engaged in an underhand game of deception, he, the reporter, doubtless knew where the office of those gentlemen was, and could go there and make his enquiries. Thereupon followed the withdrawal above-mentioned. Mr. Jay Gould's case is particularly good. A gentleman of the press going to him and announcing that there was to be an interview, was at once put in the position of the interviewed and asked by the simple-minded Gould what the papers were saying. In his relations with Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, also, Mr. Gould is amusing. Mr. Vanderbilt having been charged with being one of the confederacy which was "cornering" in company with Mr. Gould, comes out in a card, in which he asseverates that he has not been engaged in any such business, that he has never but once had anything to do with Mr. Gould, and never will have again, "except to defend myself," as he puts it, his instincts as to the nature of Mr. Jay Gould's habits—whether they are graminivorous, for instance, or, on the other hand, predatory and carnivorous—being apparently quite vivid. He adds that since his one transaction with the gentleman in question, "I have always advised all my friends to have nothing to do with him in any business transaction. I came to this conclusion after taking particular notice of his countenance." Mr. Vanderbilt goes on to declare that his name is not used in speculative Wall Street operations by any authority of his, and that he is injured and disgusted by the constant association of his name and Gould's, and that he is so far from a speculator that he does not see Wall Street three times in a twelvemonth. All things considered, this has been a great year. Let any man go over the number of men and things that have gone unto their own place since last November; and observe how virtue now exalts her horn, and say that a national thanksgiving is out of place.

The correspondents have got hold of General Starring's report in the case of Mr. George H. Butler, and a nice report it is. It appears that Butler went out to Alexandria, not, as some charitable people have supposed, because he was fond of drunkenness, loose women, laziness, and change of scene, but for these only incidentally; primarily he was what the gentlemen of his intimacy call being "on the make." He intended to get all the money he could. To this end he no sooner got to Egypt than he dismissed every agent or servant of the consulate, and let it be

understood that the highest bidder—Christian, Turk, Jew, or pagan—could have a place if he had the money. The privilege of being an American or European deputy consul or consular agent in Eastern countries is very highly valued, especially by men who have means and prefer to keep them. Ex-territoriality is an incident of consulship, and the house of a consular agent, while he holds his commission, is a strip of American soil upon which no bastinado can enter—at least if intended for the consular agent. Many elderly gentlemen, then, resorted to Mr. Butler and were accommodated with commissions, for which they paid sums of various sizes; and not only was Mammon unduly worshipped by Mr. Butler, but, as was inevitable, he went on to hate godliness, and made public remarks about our missionaries in Egypt which procured for him the just indignation of those gentlemen, who were in addition not only scandalized as Christians by his conduct, but greatly mortified as American citizens, and who were obliged to protest strongly. For reply, Mr. Butler expressed his desire to have their heads shaven, and them so despatched out of the Orient to America again.

To the first charge Butler in a note replies that he never has done nor would do such things; but General Starring says yes he did, and produces the evidence of the go-betweens who carried the napoleons from the piazza where the consular agents in expectancy used to be waiting to the room where the consul-general used to receive the rouleaux. One of these go-betweens, by the way, had to pay to prevent his being supplanted by the other. As to the well-known dancing-women story, Mr. Butler says that if he is to be condemned, so must the ex-Empress of the French, the Prince and Princess of Wales, Mr. George Wilkes, and many missionaries who have witnessed the time-honored dancing of the Almehs. But General Starring says that the dancing of these women is not "*necessarily* immoral"—the italics being the General's, and perhaps signifying that if it was Mr. George Butler and his party who composed the audience, nothing was done that very closely resembled the Fulton Street prayer-meeting. Moreover, he has a word to say about the purchase by Mr. Butler of some half-grown slave girls from the up-country. Altogether, we are glad that we are to have an attempt at a civil-service reform, and shall try as hard as we can to believe that the system which gives us the Butlers and Strologos and Thomas Murphys is now at an end.

Mr. Henry M. Stanley arrived in this city last week, and on Friday night was received at the Lotos Club by Mr. A. Oakley Hall and others, and distinguished himself by what the *Tribune* of Saturday called "sufficiently pungent and thoroughly frank and natural talk about the English geographers and their treatment of him," and by "the frank and cordial irreverence" ("to the last degree amusing") with which he treated "the Royal Geographers." That is to say, he indulged for the third or fourth time since he was honored by the Royal Geographical Society with its medal for 1873 (anticipated) in uncalled-for and unjustifiable abuse of that body, for imaginary injuries which, were they real, have been fully atoned for—confessedly so by his acceptance of the honor conferred. This continued exhibition of ill-breeding lends fresh interest to the enquiry whether Mr. Stanley is a native American. In England, he seems to have made the impression that he was a Missourian, but in his confidences to American representatives abroad in past years he has, as at Constantinople, represented himself as the son of a New York merchant; or in Crete, as the son of a clergyman on Long Island. Meantime, none of his relatives in this country have ever appeared to claim him, nor have any of his instructors, playmates, or neighbors; while the allegation that he is a Welshman has received confirmation from several quarters. We hope it will not be considered insulting, now that he is on his adopted heath, to ask Mr. Stanley to gratify the reasonable curiosity of his countrymen. If he will take our advice, his response will not be excessively "frank and

natural." We think, too, that so far from its being true, as he insinuated at the Lotos Club, that the attentions he received in England were less than they would have been had he not been an American, the reverse is the case; and that he made it exceedingly difficult for the prevailing desire to be polite towards this country to manifest itself in the face of his peculiar behavior.

Mr. Froude has been undergoing in Boston a somewhat ludicrous experience of the difficulties of the mission which he has imposed on himself, of bringing Americans to a right understanding of the nature and causes of Irish discontent. The Irish servants of the gentleman at whose house he was staying refused to remain if Mr. Froude remained, and the host was still further threatened with a combination of the "intelligence offices" against him which would leave him permanently destitute of "help." Under these untoward circumstances, the unhappy Saxon had to beat a retreat and leave the servant-girls mistresses of the situation. The more Mr. Froude lectures, too, the more excited does the Irish population become. He is, we believe, surprised and disappointed at the small amount of support he receives from the native American press and society, and must be naturally chagrined to find how much he has done to feed the flames of Irish Anglophobia, and what a large part he has played in giving Father Burke his crowded and enthusiastic audiences, and in obtaining for that eloquent and poetic gentleman the honor, in the eyes of his countrymen, of being a real historian engaged in exposing a pretender. All this is melancholy. But if Mr. Froude, before announcing his subject, had taken the precaution to make even a very cursory examination of the state of American opinion about Ireland, and of the conditions of social life in the United States, we are sure he would have chosen a different one. We have only to repeat our opinion, that the longer he persists in treating it, the more he will do to defeat his own object, and to give Fenianism and other Irish follies a much needed stimulus.

The most interesting of the October elections was that in Illinois, where, for the first time in that State and in this country, the cumulative system of voting was applied to the election of members of the Legislature. We have already had occasion to remark on the two defects of this system of minority representation—its uncertainty, and the waste of votes which it involves; to which, in the case in hand, we may add another—the small chance given to the lesser minorities, in consequence of each district returning only three representatives. The result shows, however, that there being two only or at most three parties in the field, the fewness of the candidates to be chosen makes the waste practically nothing, and the injustice to feeble minorities also of small account. That is to say, the wants for which the cumulative vote provides, or seeks to provide, are not yet felt, and meanwhile it is of undoubted value as a means of preparing the people for something better. It preserves party organization intact, and has left the dominant party in Illinois with a good working majority. The fact that in every district one Republican and one Democrat were returned, so that the contest was only over the third representative, and that he was in many cases elected on account of his personal merits, is the most gratifying feature of this election. We believe, too, that the lower half of the State sent Republican delegates, and the upper half sent Democratic delegates, for the first time, thus completely destroying the sectional complexion of the two parties.

Whether Bostonians have done well or ill in refusing so largely as they have the aid that was tendered them by other cities, they appear at this writing to think of taking action as regards receiving help from the Legislature and Congress, which we predict but few will a twelvemonth hence consider open to question. They seem in fact to be rather sorry that in the first confusion the extra session of the Legislature was thought of at all. One plan proposed since

the fire was that the city government should ask to be empowered to issue fire bonds in assistance of such owners as had lost buildings and wished to build again at once. Another was, that when Congress met, legislation should be asked for similar to that applied to the relief of Chicago last year, when Congress admitted duty-free all articles except lumber used in the construction of houses. Now both these plans appear to be looked on with growing disfavor. Mayor Medill has been written to for his opinion and experience, and has replied in a letter, in which he says that the issue of fire bonds would, in his judgment, be very detrimental, and the admission of materials duty free would be but little help. Chicago, he says, found the latter measure of almost no advantage. It will be remembered that the lumber interest was too strong in Congress last autumn to include foreign lumber among the articles admitted, and Michigan and Wisconsin succeeded in shutting out from Chicago the Canadian lumber which would have cheapened their own; except in the case of some comparatively unimportant articles, such as plate-glass, Chicago rebuilt herself with almost no assistance from the custom-houses. Boston would not fare better this autumn at Washington than Chicago fared last autumn; and moreover, Boston, building, as she intends, of brick, stone, and iron, has less use for wood than the western city has had. As for the fire bonds, Mayor Medill declares that nothing would have been able to prevent great frauds had the State attempted the policy of lending its credit. Fraudulently asked for in many instances, fraudulently lent in many, and the loan imperfectly secured in very many, loss and disaster would have ensued.

For the rest, the Legislature proceeds but slowly, no Massachusetts Legislature having, to our knowledge, proceeded rapidly of late years. The business, so far, relates mainly to insurance and the destruction of the Old South Church. Feeling is strong on both sides of both these questions. An amusing incident of the latter is the reply to Mr. R. H. Dana of an aged deacon, who was asked how it happened that Trinity Church could be filled each Sunday, and Park Street Church also, if it were true the Old South could not; the Old South was in much the same locality as the other two. To this the deacon made answer that, as he understood it, the Park Street Church has a sensational preacher, and the parson at Trinity is not a married man—which elucidation "created laughter."

It appears as if Gov. Henry C. Warmoth had about reached the end of his tether. Some merchants of Galveston, as the story now goes, recently applied to the Treasury Department for a refunding, in pursuance of a recent act of Congress, of a tax levied upon them in 1867 by Warmoth when he was a special cotton agent. Reference to the books is alleged to have shown that Warmoth, *more suo*, paid over only "a small moiety" of the tax collected. For this, instructions are said to be now out for his prosecution in the United States Court, and heaven may actually have it in mind to vouchsafe us the spectacle of this once eminent Republican statesman and more recent Liberal Reformer and Reconciliationist in striped clothes. We confess that it sometimes strikes us as a curious phenomenon of these cases of exposure that the innate badness of a man's general character is discovered coincidentally with the commission of some act of party wickedness. Warmoth, for example, has just been making things extremely hot for Messrs. Kellogg and Casey. Being an audacious fellow, and having in former years been clothed by Republicans with a nearly unlimited power to cheat at the polls, he has all but succeeded in setting aside the Custom-house victory—or alleged victory, and probably real victory—and securing for himself the United States Senatorship. As we have often said, however, in the course of the last six months, the stablest thing in the whirl of Louisiana politics has apparently been the New Orleans Custom-house; and perhaps it has been, on the whole, the best and most decent thing. At any rate, the Custom-house wing of the party, led by Casey and Kellogg and their friends, has now brought before a United States court affidavits which are

reported as proving that 6,000 votes of Grant Republicans were rejected in certain precincts by Warmoth's inspectors, and it is professed that 8,000 were driven away in other precincts. Grant, then, will get the electoral vote of Louisiana, and perhaps the Treasury Department will follow up Warmoth. We see, by the bye, that Paymaster Hodge, whose pardon has been severely animadverted upon, was let out, it is now asserted, in order that he might testify against the brokers who invested the funds for him. The release is a certain good to Hodge; the benefit to the Treasury is contingent upon a result that seems rather remote. It may come, however.

M. Thiers has not resigned, but there is no knowing how long this statement will hold true. The opposition to him has gone on strengthening and developing during the week; the superiority of the Assembly to the President, as of creator over creature, has been plainly intimated; the Right is firm in demanding a responsible ministry without Presidential interference on the floor of the house; and the "tension" is felt to be very near its height. If M. Thiers appears to have cried wolf once too often, on the other hand the indifference of the Opposition to his threat of resignation may not impossibly have braced him up to the resolve to stick to his post, and find or fight a *modus vivendi*. The situation is justly deemed grave, but the real gravity of it is that nothing has occurred to show that the peace of the country is not still dependent on the temper, wisdom, and very existence of the rain old man whom it is now sought to displace.

The Prussian Government is reported to have resolved on altering the complexion of the Upper House by the addition of new peers favorable to the Districts Administration Bill. Of this right it freely availed itself in 1854, at the height of the reaction against the Revolution, as a conservative measure. That it now finds the chamber which, in all Continental countries, is the express safeguard of monarchy and the counterpoise of popular suffrage, an obstacle to the free development of the country—and an obstacle so grave that it must be in effect abolished—is one of the most striking incidents of the day. It is even more striking than the similar tendency in England; and it proves that the fears of those who looked for a restriction of liberty in Germany as one of the consequences of the military conquest of France were unfounded, if not unreasonable. Equally unfounded, it appears, were the expectations that the overthrow of Napoleon would at once restore all their liberties to his subjects.

Bismarck and his canting Emperor not long ago gave the world new evidence of their hypocrisy by issuing an edict forbidding the continuance of public gambling in Germany. At Baden-Baden, roulette and rouge-et-noir have come to an end; and in a short time public play throughout the Empire will be done with. The gamblers themselves, except the low sharpers, have had no so very great reason to regret it. Of late years they have not found the tables much to their taste. Play has sadly degenerated, the class of people who frequent the tables not being any longer exclusively rich marquises and marchionesses, princes and princesses, kings and queens, and well-bred rooks, punters, and sharps, Valets, chambermaids, and, alas! even cooks have learnt to stake their wages upon the red or the black, and the honor of the tables, once unsullied even by suspicion, is no longer pure. There is disorder and confusion when large amounts of money change hands. Sometimes players have to get very near the tables to see that their money is not misappropriated. A general row was expected when the tables at Baden were closed, and scenes have frequently occurred there not unlike, in a smaller way, those which happen in Wall and Broad Streets on Black Fridays or when Gould and Drew begin to gamble. According to an English correspondent, the crowd in the Baden rooms on the closing night was very "mixed," and the groom of the chambers nearly broke down in speaking to him of the good old times and the changes.

WHAT NEXT?

THERE will be, of course, during the next three months, a good deal of speculation as to what it is proper to demand of Congress and of the Administration, and as to what Congress and the Administration will do. We presume nobody supposes seriously that the late election was simply a sweeping expression of confidence in the Administration, and a sweeping repudiation of the outcry about reform which led to the Cincinnati Convention. What the election has repudiated is, according to our understanding of it, not the discontent which produced the Convention—for that a very large proportion of the public shared—but the remedy which the Convention provided. We suppose very few indeed now venture to deny that had Mr. Adams, or some others whom we might name, been nominated, the result would have been very different. Victory might, indeed, not have been achieved by the Liberals, but their defeat would have left the Republican managers nothing to boast of and very little they would care to talk about. Or even, if after Greeley's nomination had been made, Mr. Schurz had had the presence of mind to leave the mob to bawl over their folly, and had gone into an adjoining building and promptly rejected the nomination, and made another, and arrayed the Germans in support of it, the Baltimore farce would never have taken place, and both he and Mr. Greeley would be happier and stronger men than they are to-day, and General Grant would feel vastly less secure. In short, what has brought ruin on the Liberal Cause is neither more nor less than the Liberal Cure. The mode of conducting the campaign which the Greeleyites adopted, and the numerous defects of their candidate, and the bad character of much of his following, towards the close revived a good deal of enthusiasm for General Grant in places in which it had long died out; but this will, under the most favorable circumstances, not long survive the election. We venture to predict that by the 1st of March next men will be saying once more about national needs and governmental duties what they were saying on the 1st of March last. In other words, "the Greeley movement" out of the way, reformers must go to work again on the old line and with the old aims.

But we believe that they will go to work with better prospects, and for two reasons: one is, that, as we tried to show three weeks ago, the President will probably be far more disposed to give ear to their complaints, and far less disposed to confide in their enemies, than he was during at least the last two years of his present term. Even if he be no better than he was, he is certainly somewhat wiser; and that he is a man to profit by experience his most embittered opponents do not deny. The one great danger which the country now feels as regards him is that he may for a time take his re-election for a general condonation of his shortcomings, and thus be slower in getting rid of some of the worst of his counsellors than his own fame may require; but that he *will* get rid of them eventually, and soon enough for all practical purposes, we shall continue to hope. If he persists in carrying out the measure of civil-service reform on which he has apparently entered, for instance, there will soon be no place left for the Murphys and Caseys; and with no renomination to provide for, the Mortons and Camerons must decline in influence. They will not be useful men for any object he is now likely to have in view.

The other reason is one which it is difficult to state without seeming to bear hard on Mr. Greeley, after he has frankly confessed his defeat and formally and finally retired from the field. It is that he represented an element in society and in public opinion which, as long as it was really powerful and influential, made the kind of reform which the country now needs—that is, administrative reform—practically unattainable. He won his weight in politics, and built up his paper, in some of the coarsest, rudest work in which a politician could engage, viz., the extirpation from a civilized community of a grossly barbarous and inhuman custom, but one or two degrees above cannibalism in its theory, and not many degrees above it in some of its manifestations. It was work that required earnestness, and persistence, and vehemence, and courage; and though

Mr. Greeley was not among the first to begin it, after he began it he did it well. It would be ungracious, and just now very tedious and unnecessary, to enumerate the various qualities of mind and character which that work developed in him. They have been described at considerable length in various newspapers and speeches during the last six months. That he has been among the civilizing influences there is no doubt. He diffused juster conceptions of social relations, greater faith in discussion, greater respect for opinion, and a higher appreciation of elementary education, through many half-barbarous regions. But he has, on the other hand, been the determined foe of nearly everything in education, manners, and policy which is now most needed to make this Government a really effective instrument of national happiness. He has represented more prominently than any other man in the country the theory to which we owe nearly all that is wrong in our politics: the deterioration in the bench and the bar, the decline in the character of public men, and the abuses of the civil service; the contempt for training and experience, and the low appreciation of mind as an instrument of progress; the dislike of discipline, and the readiness to rely on good luck, rather than on vigilance and efficiency, as a safeguard against trouble.

It would be unfair and untrue to say that Mr. Greeley has not declaimed vigorously against all concrete abuses of politics and society, but his declamation has done little good, because he has all the while been fostering the spirit which has bred them. He had become before his recent nomination the prophet of a large body, consisting, as we recently pointed out, of elderly men with bees in their bonnets, underdone young men, and of persons of all ages, sizes, and sexes who do not allow their mental processes to be controlled either by the teachings of experience or the rules of reasoning, and who, in all their efforts to do good, are haunted by the notion that there is in morals and in politics something in the nature of a philosopher's stone, or panacea, which a hodman is just as likely to discover as a philosopher, and which, once discovered, would put an end to human ills, and relieve us of the necessity of learning, of accumulating, of comparing and inferring. Almost every one of them has a nostrum of his own; with some it is unbolted flour, with others easy divorce, with others carelessness about their clothes, with others vegetable diet, with others the destruction of colleges, with others an increase in the number of newspapers and lectures, with others a more equal distribution of money, and with others a better time for the lazy and the idle and improvident. All are armed with phrases of greater or less mystery. Some want a "larger life," others a "deeper insight," others a "broader view." We do not say that all these people wished to see Greeley President, but Greeley's spirit was in them. He was to them the harbinger of a state of things in which men would know things without learning them, talk without being questioned or contradicted, and in which states would be ruled by the soft impulses of loving hearts. The war and its results—we need not point out why—enormously stimulated their activity. After the overthrow of slavery, all things seemed to them possible—no dream incapable of realization; and they began to think that the government of the country was almost within their reach, and that the "New Society" could now be founded on American soil, and the long-deferred triumph of the Babes and Sucklings over the Wise Men be at last achieved. Greeley's nomination at Cincinnati was the result of this delusion; it was precipitated by what proved to be a grand mistake—the notion that the farmers and laboring men thought that the great requisite of a statesman was to have worked with his hands, and to be indifferent about bathing and clean linen.

We do not think we exaggerate when we say that the bursting of this bubble marks the beginning of a new era in American politics. It opens up a field to reformers such as they have not had since the belief grew up that, if you sufficiently widened the seat of the sovereignty, the machinery of government would be sure to run well. It offers us a fair prospect of seeing institutions based on the facts of human nature, instead of on dreams and visions. We shall

not be told so frequently as we have been told, when the facts are against a theory, that facts are impious, cynical, and degrading, and ought to be disregarded; that God Almighty has communicated to some popular editor, or lecturer, or preacher the secret of human society; that history, and statistics, and political economy are vanities; and that the affairs of a great community can be properly administered when one of the principal functions of their government is to furnish, like a horse-race, stakes and excitement to a herd of gamblers.

THE PENNSYLVANIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

THE State of Pennsylvania is now adding one to the long list of "Constitutional Conventions." The power of these conventions goes to the very root of our civil rights, and with any other people their sittings would be regarded as a serious and eventful time. With us they come and go, awakening rarely more than torpid interest, causing little discussion, producing less of intelligent research or profound reasoning. Occasionally, as in the New York Convention of 1846, or the Illinois Convention of 1870, a party or a "movement" has some decisive change in view, and proceeds to effect it with something like faith and energy; but, ordinarily, the public mind has come to regard their work as mere experiments. When a State like New York deliberately provides that the foundation of its laws shall be upheaved every twenty years, it is evident that its constitution is deemed merely an experiment, and that there is no great confidence felt as to its success; and when we call to mind the number of the States which compose the Union, and the number of conventions which some of these States have held in the course of the last eighty years, it is plain enough that, with anything like intelligent statesmanship, these experiments should have given us by this time something like perfection in government. That they have not; that the people of to-day are no better satisfied with their methods of government than were the people who framed constitutions at the beginning of this century; and that no man feels as safe in his person, or as secure in his property, as did the majority of Americans at that time, are assertions which few of our readers will quarrel with. Those who believe that mankind has grown better, the means of happiness greater, and that the intelligence and liberality of the public mind have greatly advanced, still confess that in the administration of our State governments we have gained nothing, and that the American portion of mankind was as well governed then, and with quite as scrupulous a regard for all that appertained to their civil and personal rights, as to-day. Undoubtedly, in certain general principles these constitutions have kept pace with the advancing ideas of our civilization, one abolishing slavery, another imprisonment for debt. But in the forms of government, the methods of administration, the practical results which affect the well-being of society, does any one contend that they are more successful than those which they supplanted?

If we turn to these constitutions, past and present, we find one principle, so to speak, running through all their various forms and changes—the constant curtailment of legislative power. Whatever changes may be made in the executive or the judiciary or the forms of government, it is almost always evident that the chief work, and indeed the chief object, of every new convention is to place some fresh restriction upon the representative bodies of the people. It would seem that the representatives of the people, elected annually or biennially or, at most, quadrennially, of all others would have been the last to be restricted. The right of the people to make laws through their lawfully-chosen representatives has been deemed the very essence of constitutional liberty, and yet here we have the people constantly abridging and restricting the power and discretion of their own immediate agents.

It is also astonishing how much of the work of these conventions has been mere legislation—work which in other countries would have been done by the law-making power, without a thought of its involving a change of the organic law, but which our legislatures, through inability or inefficiency or timidity, have left undone. In-

deed, it seems as though there had been an unconscious policy in the American mind to elect ordinarily as legislators men incompetent, incapable, untrustworthy, and once in twenty or thirty years to call out those of real character and power to undo much that the others have done, and to effect those things that the others were too weak or ignorant or venal to effect. New York, for instance, needed law reform, and much less of it than England did when Brougham began his crusade. But the State exterminated its courts of equity, and tore up its whole judicial system from the lowest court of record to the highest appellate tribunal by a single act, recklessly instituting an experiment which on the one hand was practically beyond its power of recall, and on the other affected every acre of land and every dollar of property and the rights and liberties of every member of the community. Such gigantic legislation, effected during the brief period of a convention, is not philosophical advancement in the science of government, nor does it receive any sanction from either the experience or common sense of mankind. Our legislatures form, indeed, the weak point of our American system. The fact is seen by many, and must be acknowledged by all. If our law-making power is a failure, where is the failure to end? To make laws and impose taxes through their representatives was the one thing for which our fathers with solemn deliberation entered into the war of the Revolution. Does it not seem as though we have been deliberately trading away that great advantage, as it was supposed to be? Why is it that the American legislation has retrograded, when the legislation of all other constitutional governments has improved?

Turning to the conditions which have been imposed upon American legislation, one that must immediately strike an enquirer is the extraordinary number of legislators. We have, including Congress, the Territories, and the District of Columbia, forty-eight legislatures in the United States. Allowing to these an average of one hundred and twenty-five for both branches, *we have six thousand legislators* as the law-making power of the American people.

Whether such a legislative system can be of high character is the problem. Undoubtedly we have among our millions six thousand men of requisite integrity and capability. But the political duality of the country requires that the number be doubled; to give and maintain high character in our legislatures we need twelve thousand unexceptionable candidates. Even this number might be procured at the outset, and, relatively, in the early days of the country it was forthcoming; but the effect of such a number must be sooner or later to make the positions in popular estimation "cheap."

It should therefore have been the policy of the American people to uphold the dignity of the legislative position by all the means within their power. Unfortunately, the reverse has been the policy, if it can be called a policy. The number, by the multiplication of "towns" and the growth of population, has sometimes been allowed to increase; the tenure of the office has often been shortened; and the "district" system has been introduced. To Pennsylvania these remarks are not altogether applicable; the Senators hold for three years, and the House of Representatives is limited to one hundred members. As to legislative districts, the system in Pennsylvania is singularly mixed, Philadelphia being cut up into eighteen single districts; one of the large counties, Lancaster, sending four members, and in other cases several counties being put together to form a district, which is then represented by two, three, and, in one case, four members. It is to be hoped, therefore, that if the Convention propose changes in the legislative system, they will be changes in the right direction, tending toward the increased dignity of the individual legislator, and that the "single district system," whose pernicious effects were instantly observable in New York and Massachusetts, will receive no favor.

But the cry will doubtless go up from Pennsylvania that holding on to the existing system and trying by some slight means to raise the dignity of the individual legislator, is insufficient; and this is true. The legislatures of Pennsylvania have never stood high in public estimation. They have been commonly associated

with divorces and repudiation, and supposed to be peculiarly under the control of great corporations. They are not well thought of by their own constituents, if we may believe a small part of what is said of them; and the problem the public mind has set itself to work out is not, How shall we make the legislature better? but, How far can we do without the legislature?

The effort to do without legislation has succeeded in no State where it has been attempted. Some of its incidental reforms have been well enough, as the substitution of general laws in the place of special acts and charters; but for the reason that they have been steps toward the simplification of the machinery of government. It is well to reduce the power of legislatures to the simple task of making laws, but there the reduction, of necessity, must cease. We must have laws in the future, and the great object of laws is the repression of evils. How can society expect peace, security, or prosperity if that power is to be deliberately left in unworthy hands?

In Pennsylvania there now seems to be an effort to take from the legislature its power, and of course its discretion, in regard to the local affairs of cities. It is said that the worthless set known as professional politicians now compose the delegation which annually goes up from Philadelphia to Harrisburg, and that there they control the city's interests to their personal profit and advantage. It is argued that local interests should be managed by local authorities, and it is inferred that if this power of evil could be wrested from the legislature, it would probably expire. But if these same politicians can control the caucuses that annually send them to Harrisburg, will they not be able to control other caucuses which will send them to the local board or council that succeeds to the powers of the legislature? In New York, the respectable part of the community have more than once appealed to the legislature for its intervention, and looked to it as the only means of protection against their own municipal authorities. Turn this matter round as we may, it comes back to the necessity of upright, intelligent, responsible law-makers. If we cannot sooner or later secure them—if our American society has not enough of virtue, integrity, and intelligence to choose such, it being already invested with the power, then our American system of government must fail.

To accomplish that result is the end which every conscientious member of the convention should keep in view. There are certain means toward it of which it is hardly necessary to remind our readers, so often have they been discussed in our pages. There is the wearisome frequency of the annual election, keeping up steady employment for bands of trained politicians, and wearing out the patience of that part of the community which has work of its own to attend to. And we may note here that the biennial system is highly spoken of by sound observers where it has been tried. Then there is the fearful multiplicity of elective offices. And it must be remembered that the great host of office-seekers in this country is largely caused by the fact that our short tenures keep these offices substantially always vacant. Not till the tenure of all offices except the chief executive and legislative is during good behavior, will this evil be removed. It is idle to hold before men the chance of filling an office, and then expect them not to seek it. And it makes little difference whether the offices are filled by election or appointment, so long as they are always open, inviting applicants. We may next note the reform of city, county, or village corporations, by treating them as corporations having the care and management of certain property held for the common good, and treating those who contribute to it, i.e., the taxpayers, as the stockholders. Lastly, there is minority representation, and such a system as will enable men to concentrate their votes upon the most deserving candidates.

The executive branch of the government, we think, will receive little attention except in the matter of making one officer elective by the people. As to the judiciary, it is elective, but the term of the judges of the Supreme Court is for fifteen years, and they command the respect of the people. The judicial system of Pennsylvania is remarkably simple, and, when compared with that of New York, it must cause surprise that so few judges and courts can

dispose of the litigation of so large a manufacturing and mining community. The most practicable reform likely to be accomplished is to lengthen the term of office of all the judges, and especially those of the inferior courts. We trust it will be borne in mind that any judicial system which will bring the most eminent lawyers to the bench cannot be very far from a good one.

THE FATE OF AN HISTORIC EDIFICE.

"But yet the pity of it, Iago!—O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago!"—*Othello*, IV. 1.

OUR country is not rich in historic buildings around which cluster our few traditions. Of those we have, the work of preserving an unequal proportion rests with the inhabitants of a single city, and that city, it is almost unnecessary to add, is Boston. Almost the first enquiry made, when the news of the great fire spread over the country, concerned the fate of these famous edifices, and the expression of relief and gratitude became universal when it was known that all of them were spared. The fire stopped at the threshold of the Old South Church. The explosions of gunpowder had destroyed its windows, but walls and belfry and spire stood intact. Scarcely, however, have the press of other cities found time to congratulate their elder sister that her great loss included nothing beyond the power of money to replace, when it is formally announced that those most immediately concerned by no means regard this as matter for felicitation. The single fault they have to find with the fire is, that having gone so far, it did not go one step further, and include their most venerated church in the long list of its victims. Having failed to do so, they now propose to complete its unfinished work, and level one more historic monument to the ground.

That such an act of sacrilege and breach of trust to the whole American people should be thought of, much less actually perpetrated, reflects no credit on the Bostonians of to-day. The Old South is unquestionably the oldest and most venerated church in their city; if not, indeed, in all America. Few strangers from the newer portions of the country visit the old town without pausing amid the throng of Washington Street to read the inscription on the unpretending belfry—so plain, so solid, so typical of the generation which erected it—which tells in fewest words the history of the church. That history has been part of the history not of Massachusetts and Boston alone, but of the common country.

Built in the year 1729, during the administration of Gov. Burnet, son of the famous bishop and historian of William and Mary's reign, it was within the walls of this church, not less than within those of the Old State House or of Faneuil Hall, that the early spirit of independence found eloquent expression. It was through the pulpit window of this very building, then thronged with British uniforms, that Dr. Joseph Warren made his entrance by a ladder on March 5, 1775, to deliver his oration on the Boston Massacre. Tradition says that while he spoke, an officer, sitting on the pulpit steps before him, significantly amused himself by playing with two musket-balls, tossing them carelessly from hand to hand. The next year saw the sacred building turned into a stable and a riding-school for the British cavalry. More recently, it has been in this church that for many years the legislature and executive of Massachusetts have listened to those election sermons with which, from time immemorial, the government of that State has begun its annual labors.

The best poetry and fiction of America have also freely contributed to the interest which clusters about the building. It was "the knell of midnight from the steeple of the Old South" which Hawthorne tells us mingled with the "dismal strains" of music and the roar of rebel artillery, to the accompaniment of which the weird procession vanished from before the Province House, on the night of "Howe's Masquerade." It was this same bell which was ominously tolling a death as Lady Eleanor Rochcliffe descended at the gate of Gov. Shute's mansion; while it was in a chased silver goblet belonging to "the communion-plate of the Old South Church" that her crazed lover offered the sacramental wine to the wearer of the fatal mantle. Indeed, Bow-bells are not more associated with London, or more familiar to London ears, than the bell of the Old South has been to many generations of Bostonians. It rang out glad peals from its present belfry at the coronation of kings, while Boston was yet the capital of a province; and it rang yet gladder peals for peace in 1783, and again in 1815, and once again in 1865. It tolled sadly for the victims of the Boston Massacre, and for George Washington, and for Abraham Lincoln. For more years than we can now name, "the clock of the Old South has thrown its voice of ages on the breeze, knelling the hourly knell of the Past, crying out far and wide through the multitudinous city, and filling its ears with its reverberating depth of tone."

Under these circumstances we are almost inclined to coincide with its

pew-holders, and to express a sincere regret that the fire did not save the ancient edifice from desecration at their hands. Had it gone down on the night of November 9, it would at least have met an end not unbecomingly its great history. As it is, it seems doomed to drag out its final years as a post-office, rented to the United States at the rate of \$23,000 a year, or any part thereof, exclusive of taxes. The British officers had better taste. The riding-school was at least more dramatic.

Considering the history of the building, the fire, and all the circumstances of the case, there is, indeed, to persons at a distance, a bathos about the whole thing which is not ludicrous simply because it is sad. Outside of a small Boston circle, it seems scarcely possible that any body of average men and women could take so narrow a view of a matter of such general concernment. Here are some twoscore persons who, by mere accident, find themselves the trustees of an edifice of first-class historical interest. Instead of jealously guarding and preserving it, they are wholly unable to see anything but the inconvenience to themselves and their families of attending religious services in it once a week. With the utmost complacency, and with a tone which shows how wholly they fail to appreciate the attitude they occupy before the wondering gaze of their countrymen, they announce that they have "no veneration for walls, but they do revere Christ, their Lord"; and then they vary this delectable statement by the introduction of some business principles into religion, announcing that "no veneration is due to bricks and mortar, but that the great principle involved is the best care of the society's funds." "Bricks and mortar"! "Society funds"! Undoubtedly the pew-holders of the Old South Church of Boston are most respectable persons, but to dwellers at a distance they do seem a little singular. They evidently belong to that class of New Englanders whom Hawthorne knew so well, and towards whom he felt such an instinctive antipathy—"excellent, but exceedingly matter-of-fact sort of men, sturdily accustomed to take what is called the common-sense view of all matters that come under their consideration. With hearts about as tender as other people's, they have heads as hard and impenetrable, and, therefore, perhaps as empty, as one of those iron pots which it may be a part of their business to sell."

One can imagine a committee of these worthy persons visiting Europe, with a view, perhaps, to picking up some hints on church architecture wherewith to grace the edifice which is to replace the Old South. With what indignant, outspoken contempt they would regard an effete race which allowed such piles of "brick and mortar" as St. Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey to occupy two of the best business sites in London—sites, too, either of which would command a rental much exceeding \$23,000, and taxes, per annum. Their location also is wholly undesirable for places of worship; they are miles away from Tyburnia, or May Fair, or the West End; indeed, in the eyes of our committee their longer preservation would seem such an unjustifiable use of "the funds of the society" that they could not but shake the dust of London from their feet and go over to Paris. There the towers of St. Jaques and Notre Dame would renew their disgust; yet even the Commune spared to France its old religious sanctuaries; moved thereto, perhaps, by what one of the committee characterized at home as "a mere reminiscence." Doubtless, however, Rome would occasion our friends the severest shock of all. We can easily imagine these worthy, matter-of-fact gentlemen standing in the Coliseum and measuring with their eyes that useless quarry of building materials. They would see in it a vast space, adapted only for games of the circus or the conflicts of gladiators, but now preserved as a church. It is wholly unfit for purposes of worship; it is far removed from the residence quarters of the city; while, so far as circuses are concerned, it is never utilized for entertainments of that nature; and, as to gladiatorial conflicts, they are "a mere reminiscence" and wholly repugnant to the spirit of modern improvement. Yet to the great detriment "of the funds of the society," no doubt, this useless pile of "brick and mortar" is preserved, and even venerated. Truly, the peoples of Europe are indeed benighted, but *nous avons changé tout cela*.

It is absurd to be angry with men like those into whose hands the Old South has unfortunately passed. They act according to their lights, and it was long ago conceded that against stupidity the gods themselves contend in vain. The power is in this case theirs, and doubtless they will exercise it. They will, out of the market value of the Old South, construct a more comfortable and showy edifice in the fashionable quarter of Boston, and there, doubtless, they will hereafter worship after the fashion of their creed, hugging themselves in the fond belief that in trampling on "a sentiment" they have advanced the cause of religion. With them it would be useless to reason. An evil chance placed in their hands one of the very few buildings of which America can boast as enjoying almost a world-wide fame, and they conscientiously destroyed it. Of one thing they may rest assured—the

next generation of Bostonians will not forget them, for their work can never be undone.

This proceeding, however, is not likely to stop with the Old South. Undoubtedly the convenient principle that mere "sentiments" of "veneration" must not be allowed to protect piles of "brick and mortar" will find other subjects of application. In Boston, as we have said, it so happens that an unusual proportion of our more famous edifices are found. Three of these we have already alluded to—the Old South, the Old State-House, so famous in early Revolutionary history, and, lastly, Faneuil Hall, the "Cradle of Liberty." Of these the Old South is doomed, and the Old State-House has long been threatened. The one represents too much money in the shape of a corner lot peculiarly available for business purposes, the other stands in the way of certain public improvements. Temple Bar has, it is true, stood in their way somewhat longer, but, fortunately for "sentiment," Temple Bar is not in Boston. Both of the other quaint memorials of bygone times and famous deeds of famous men will soon be gone beyond recovery; how long will Faneuil Hall outlast them? It unfortunately occupies a space which might be far better utilized as a public square—a most needed convenience in that part of Boston, for the Hall is now very much in the way of market wagons, the number of which is said to be constantly increasing; it is, besides, even more inconveniently placed than the Old South for those purposes of public meeting for which it was constructed. The argument is very strong, and will doubtless commend itself to the pew-holders of the Old South. Having finally disposed of one pile of "brick and mortar" around which, in all minds but their own, an unusual degree of "veneration" and "sentiment" had unfortunately gathered, they can next turn their destroying energies to another, though hardly more famous structure.

MADAME RÉCAMIER.

PARIS, November 8, 1872.

A NIECE of Madame Récamier, the widow of M. Charles Lenormant, of the French Institute, published in 1859 two volumes, under the title of "Memoirs and Correspondence, from the Papers of Madame Récamier." She has just added a volume to these valuable memoirs, under the name of "Madame Récamier—The Friends of her Youth." No person has played so interesting a part in French society as this lady, whose name is intimately connected with the history of the French Revolution, of the Empire, and of the Restoration. When she was getting very old, though she preserved her beauty nearly till the end, she once said to a friend who complimented her on the preservation of her charms: "Alas! you cannot deceive me. The little chimney-sweeps don't turn their heads any more in the streets." It is not so with her memory. Even now, amidst the excitement of politics, in the confusion of so many momentous events, the name of Madame Récamier still attracts the attention of the public. She is, so to speak, a representative person, and she represents a thing which is by degrees becoming a thing of the past—the refined sociability for which France was once so famous.

From the days of her youth to the days of 1848, Madame Récamier was the queen of what the French call a *salon*. She was the first after the stormy days of the Revolution to open an elegant asylum to all those who had escaped its fury, as well as to some of the most distinguished personages whom the Revolution had brought to light. The *parens*, the sons of '89, the generals who had won great victories for France, the representatives of the new principles of equality, mixed in her house with the members of the old aristocracy whom the fury of the Terrorists had spared or forgotten, who came back from the emigration, or who had concealed themselves in the ranks of the army. Madame Récamier could probably not have played under the ancien régime the rôle which she assumed; she had no title, no rank; her husband was a rich banker, and the financiers were not much thought of before the Revolution. The noblemen, as we see in the comedies and memoirs of the time, were quite willing to associate with them, to receive their sumptuous hospitality; but their wives did not see the wives of the *fermiers généraux*. Madame Récamier was not, as Madame de Sévigné, Madame Dudeffant, and so many others, a person of brilliant wit; her letters are somewhat dull; they are characterized by prudence and discretion more than by any positive qualities; but she was imbued with good sense and caution, and she seems to have understood at once, more by instinct than by any chain of reasoning, the very peculiar characters of French society as it emerged from the storms of the Revolution. She perceived very well that the power of an aristocracy, long after it has been politically destroyed, continues to exist as a power of imagination. She not only felt a natural sympathy for the victims of the Revolution; she knew that, socially speaking, the members of the ancient aristocracy were still, or would soon be—

come again, a great power in France. It would be a vulgar accusation to accuse her of any servility towards birth or rank; she simply recognized the influence resulting from centuries of the highest culture then known in Europe and recognized by all foreign nations. But with all her advantages, her fortune, her extraordinary and almost divine beauty (the two pictures by David, one of which is at the Louvre, give me more the impression of a Greek goddess than of an ordinary woman), she would probably never have become the intimate friend of such men as Mathieu de Montmorency, of the Duc de Laval, and others, if the French Revolution had not loosened all the old social ties. Madame Récamier felt herself that she owed something to the Revolution; she did not compose her *salon* exclusively of members of the old aristocracy; she was careful to mix them with the Bonapartes, the Bernadottes, the new generals and marshals, the statesmen of the new times. Her house was a sort of neutral ground where all parties could meet; it required no small dexterity to avoid all collisions, to harmonize so many elements; but Madame Récamier was eminently fit for such a work. She had no strong political passions, she was not a politician herself; and, when all rules had become uncertain, she only strictly adhered to the rules of friendship and of courtesy; in times when all loyalty was extinct, she was a loyal friend. Her fidelity to her allies was a sort of religion. When force rules the world, man is thrown back, as it were, on the most simple and natural elements of society. There was, no doubt, some coquetry (I use the word in the French sense) in the conduct of Madame Récamier towards her friends. She took pride in preserving in her court, as devoted, humble, constant friends, all those who, one after another, attracted by her charms, had first been ardent and suppliant lovers. She was herself a vestal at a time when the uncertainty of life, the dangers of the future, the traditions of the court of Louis XV. and of the end of the eighteenth century, which had survived even the horrors of the Terror, allowed much liberty and even license. She inspired love and enjoyed her power, but she never felt love herself; at least, she never succumbed to it.

The history of her marriage is well known. The passion of love which was stifled in her, under circumstances which need not be dwelt upon, was transformed in her into a sort of passionate friendship. She inspired the most constant and the warmest attachments, and all her life was spent in efforts to satisfy her friends, whether young or old, illustrious or obscure. For it must be said that if she required from her followers a certain sort of moral refinement, of mental culture, she was really indifferent to power, fortune, even glory. She treated poor Ballanche, young Ampère, young Loménie, with just as much consideration as Chateaubriand or Prince Augustus of Prussia, who offered her his hand. She had at an early age seen all the vanity of human affairs; she had learned to hate and fear the modern Cæsar when he was at the height of his glory; she had seen the sons of the oldest families exiled or destitute; she had patronized queens and kings. Madame Bernadotte, a very humble woman and very timid, was glad to have a place in her *salon* when her husband was already a king. Madame Récamier had known familiarly Murat and Queen Hortense; and she had learned to appreciate men not by the rule of success but by the delicate rules of morality. The manners of French society were in her time very different from what they have become since. Money was not the standard either of the old noblesse or of the parvenus of the Empire. Many ancient families had been completely ruined; young generals who were poor to-day might return to-morrow enriched by an Imperial dotation. Society was, in many respects, less vulgar. Very few people would consent to live now in the rooms which Madame Récamier occupied in the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Gentlemen had not yet made themselves the slaves of valets. They could arrive on foot, with umbrellas, in cabs; they entered, without being announced, rooms which were lighted only with a lamp. There were no refreshments but a few glasses of syrup. The men left without noise or any formal adieu, taking what is still called in England "French leave." The ladies were generally in the simplest toilettes. Madame Récamier during all her life never wore anything but white muslin gowns. There was no coarse screaming at the doors and in the ante-chambers, "The Duchess of X's carriage stops the way," and so on. Even in the old Faubourg St. Germain, the end of an evening in one of the hotels of the nobility resembles now somewhat the *sortie* from the opera. There are very few *salons* now left—places where a lady receives sometimes once a week, sometimes even every night, all those among her friends who choose to come in for an hour, to bring the news of the day, to discuss the last book, the last piece, the last speech.

Such a constant and easy intercourse used in old days to become with years real friendship. It is very curious in Madame Récamier's letters, and in those of her friends, to notice that the *habitués* of her *salon* called themselves by their Christian names. She was for all of them Juliette, the incomparable Juliette; Mathieu de Montmorency was Mathieu, and so on. You would no longer find now so much liberty, so much intimacy. A *salon*

in those days was in fact a small club of gentlemen and ladies; a club where all the members knew each other so well that they never attempted to play any part, any rôle, to deceive each other. They paid their contribution in conversation, in wit, in friendly offices. Most gentlemen belonged to several *salons*, as they do now to various clubs; but there was, of course, one where they felt most at home. It has been said of the *salon* what is said now of the club, that it destroys the spirit which builds up the family home. Madame de Chateaubriand very seldom went to Madame Récamier's, while the Marquis was to be found every night by the side of the adored Juliette. Our modern routs and balls, expensive, gorgeous, and, in a certain sense, vulgar as they are, have at least, it is said, this advantage, that they do not so much separate husbands and wives. I have met for years, in some old-fashioned houses, gentlemen whose wives I have never seen; many a man even now goes every night from place to place paying his court to the Duchess—and the Countess—, while his wife leads the life of a Roman matron. Do not infer from this contrast that these husbands are bad husbands; their wives are often perfectly contented with their lot. The world can do nothing for them, while it can promote the fortunes of their husbands, whether they are engaged in literary or in political work. It is a very common thing in France to see such men as Taine and About without their wives, though they are very good husbands. Renan, who is a reformer, would not, on the contrary, go often where he would be asked alone. It is much to the credit of M. Thiers that he always carries in his orbit not only Madame Thiers, but her unmarried sister, Mademoiselle Dosne, who has always lived with him.

It is very difficult, I suppose, in all countries to perceive exactly the shades of social life. In France, it is perhaps more difficult than anywhere else, on account of the changes made by so many revolutions. Madame Récamier represents a society which is now nearly extinct. I have known intimately some of her friends, and they certainly were not only remarkable by the refinement of their manners and by their high culture, but by a certain sort of moral elevation, which I am afraid is becoming more rare. We cannot help smiling at some expressions of sentimentality which we find in the letters of Madame Récamier's friends; this perpetual looking in each other's hearts is somewhat tedious and ridiculous, as well as these effusions which offend our modern shyness; but one may well envy the nobility of thought which is felt in the pages of the "*Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*," in the last works of Ampère, in the correspondence of Madame de Staël, in all the pages which were written for the eyes of the "incomparable Juliette." One may envy also the delightful simplicity, the easy intercourse, the frugal elegance, and, if I may say so, the *ideal* worldliness of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Whatever may have been the defects of this extraordinary circle, those who were received in it only paid their tribute to beauty and to genius; they had some of the qualities if they had some of the affectations of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; they represented the better part of the French nation—the least frivolous, though they were not austere, the most independent of the rulers of the day, of the tyranny of wealth, of political dictatorship; they formed a sort of social oasis, peaceful, serene, enchanted by the presence of one who was the most wonderful type of beauty and of purity, placed above all parties, above all classes, in the realm of mind.

Correspondence.

MR. CAMERON AND THE PHILADELPHIA POSTMASTERSHIP.
TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The Washington despatches and of one of the stronger Administration papers, together with the editorial comments thereon, in speaking of the visit of Pennsylvania politicians to the capital to "see" the President about the postmastership of this city, either knowingly or not mislead the public in conveying the impression that Gen. Grant appointed Mr. Fairman *against* the wish and advice of Senator Cameron. I happen to know that quite the contrary is the case. Mr. F., and no one else, was from the very first Mr. Cameron's choice.

F. was some years ago selected by Postmaster Bingham for secretary of his private office on account of his quickness of penmanship and general "smartness." He has proved so valuable in a number of ways to the postmaster and to his brother James, who is cashier of the office, that, when Gen. Bingham, last October, was elected to a lucrative municipal office, F., by his advice and strong assistance, and backed by Cameron, at once became the most prominent candidate for the postmastership.

In what connection Gen. Bingham and his brother James stand to Senator Cameron you can easily ascertain from any one at all familiar with Philadelphia and Pennsylvania politics.

Mr. Fairman's character may be as good as it should be. I for one have

no reason to say that it is not; and it may no doubt be said that it was eminently fit and proper that one of the subordinates of the office should be promoted to its head. What I wish to protest against is the assertion that the appointment of Mr. Fairman furnishes any proof that President Grant has sent the Camerons to the right-about. Very respectfully yours,

ALTKLUG.

PHILADELPHIA, November 22, 1872.

THE SUPPORTERS OF WOODHULL & CLAPLIN'S WEEKLY. TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have just finished the perusal of *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, on which have been based the prosecutions now pending for the dissemination of obscene literature. As this is the first time that I have had an opportunity of weighing for myself the utterances of these missionaries of Cotyito, you can understand what a revelation this apotheosis of nastiness has been to me.

The surprise has been heightened by observing the class of advertising patrons who are not ashamed to support the *Weekly* by contributing to its their advertisements. Ought Messrs. J. J. Cisco & Son, Henry Clews & Co., Fisk & Hatch, A. Belmont & Co., Clark, Dodge & Co., Geo. Opdyke & Co., and others of the same high standing, to be allowed to escape their share of responsibility for the maintenance of such a moral lazaret-house?

Very respectfully, etc.,

L.

PHILADELPHIA, November 18, 1872.

[There undoubtedly was a very culpable and reprehensible easiness on the part of many men and women who should have been above it in tolerating these creatures; but apparently "L." is not fully informed as to all the circumstances of the case. Woodhull & Claflin began by publishing a newspaper in which they did indeed promulgate doctrines which, as everybody should have seen, embodied a theory upon which, however it may be with saints and angels, ordinary men and women cannot act without unduly encouraging the brute-beast part of their natures, and which will be openly acted upon when society goes to pieces, and not before. But they published this sheet of theirs ostensibly to "discuss social problems"; to make philosophical remarks about "the reform"; to establish a "pantarchy," to bring into use Mr. Stephen Pearl Andrews's "Alwato" or universal language; and as liberty of discussion is dear to the American people, this dirty crime against liberty was carelessly allowed to be committed in liberty's name. Respectable men who did not well know what this precious pair were doing, who were wheedled or bored into subscribing and advertising, had a notion that the paper was wild-headed and impractical, but that it was only doing some of the regular "long-haired" sort of nonsense, and so permitted it to go on publishing their advertisements—very wrongly permitted it, we think, but not exactly as "L." supposes. Again, the *Weekly*, as a philosophic and pantarchical journal, with its "social discussions" and Stephen Pearl Andrewsisms, was dead, we may say, from the beginning; it never paid for itself, and by-and-by Woodhull, Claflin, and Blood had to discontinue its publication. The edition of which "L." has seen a copy was *sui generis*. Being in pressing need of some social reform, as they say, they resuscitated their paper after it had been some months dead, and published one number which was of an open and shameless rascality never before ventured upon by them. The advertisements which it contained were probably there either in consequence of unfulfilled contracts, or were downright "padding," wholly unauthorized by the advertisers.—ED. NATION.]

Notes.

ESTES & LAURIAT, Boston, announce a new edition of Murphy's "Critical Commentary on Genesis"; a "Hand-book of Hardy Trees, Shrubs, and Herbaceous Plants," by W. B. Helmsley; and "Our Common Insects," by Dr. A. S. Packard, jr.—Specimen order-books of Mansell & Co.'s photographs of objects in the British Museum, to which we alluded a few weeks ago (*Nation*, No. 378), may now be seen at E. & H. T. Anthony & Co.'s establishment, No. 591 Broadway, or catalogues will be sent on application, stating price per set and singly, mounted or unmounted. Classic, Egyptian,

Assyrian, and prehistoric art and industry are here vividly depicted, from the best remains. The prices are moderate, and within the means of all who purchase pictures for instruction or household adornment.

—It has been suggested to us that we misapprehended the meaning of the New York correspondent of the *Messenger de Paris* in regard to the choice of Presidents by "the Senate and House of Representatives in convention"; and that he referred to the Congressional caucuses which, prior to 1825, regularly nominated the candidates afterwards voted upon by the people. Referring again to his language, we judge that this was probably his meaning, though he speaks of such nominations as having been the right of Congress, and would, we think, leave the impression on the minds of his French readers that that body elected as well as nominated the President. He is certainly entitled to the benefit of the doubt. We must add that we overlooked Jefferson's election, for his first term, by the House of Representatives, in circumstances somewhat different from those of John Quincy Adams's.

—"Sketch of Anti-Slavery Opinions before the Year 1800" is the title of a learned and interesting essay by Mr. William F. Poole, of the Cincinnati Public Library, published in the *Cincinnati Gazette* of November 18. Its merits are such as to make it highly desirable that it should be printed in book form for permanent preservation. The sketch opens with a curious description of Washington's library, now in the possession of the Boston Athenæum (of which Mr. Poole was formerly librarian), and in particular of a rare pamphlet comprised in it, being, to give the title in full, "An Oration upon the Moral and Political Evil of Slavery, delivered at a public meeting of the Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Relief of Free Negroes and Others unlawfully held in Bondage. Baltimore, July 4, 1791. By George Buchanan, M.D., member of the American Philosophical Society. Baltimore: Printed by Philip Edwards, 1793" (20 pp. 8vo). Copious extracts from this very plain-spoken discourse are followed by an enquiry into who the orator was, and who were some of the obscurer negroes alluded to by him as having shown remarkable mental ability. This leads naturally to Jefferson's opinion of the capacity of the colored race as expressed in his "Notes on Virginia," which, Mr. Poole thinks, would have been materially modified (perhaps we should say strengthened) had Jefferson been aware of the geniuses instanced by Dr. Buchanan. In 1785, writing to Dr. Richard Price, of London, he used this remarkable language:

"Southward of the Chesapeake your book will find but few readers concurring with it in sentiment on the subject of slavery. From the mouth to the head of the Chesapeake the bulk of the people will approve its theory. Northward of the Chesapeake you may find, here and there, an opponent to your doctrine, as you find, here and there, a robber and murderer. Emancipation is put in such a train that in a few years there will be no slaves northward of Maryland. In Maryland, I do not see such a disposition to begin the redress of this enormity as in Virginia. These [the inhabitants of Virginia] have sucked in the principles of liberty, as it were, with their mothers' milk, and it is to these I look with anxiety to turn the fate of this question."

—Mr. Poole goes on to note the progress in anti-slavery sentiment from the date of this letter to the delivery of Dr. Buchanan's oration; and, using, we presume, as his main authority Mr. Edward Needles's "Historical Memoir of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery" (Philadelphia, 1842), describes the formation of similar organizations in New York (1785), Rhode Island (1789, incorporated 1790), Maryland (1789), Connecticut (1790), Virginia (1791), New Jersey and Delaware (1792), and quotes from the memorials which they from time to time addressed to Congress. We may remark here that in explaining why Massachusetts, in which slavery had already ceased rather than been abolished, had no abolition society like Rhode Island and Connecticut, he omits to mention the fact that among the incorporators of the "Providence Society" 63 were persons belonging in Massachusetts (in Rhode Island 117, in Connecticut 3, in Vermont 1), making it really a New England Anti-Slavery and Freedman's Aid Society. Mr. Poole next argues, from the insistence of South Carolina and Georgia on the insertion of the pro-slavery compromises in the Constitution, that "the popular idea that the political anti-slavery agitation was forced upon the South by the North, and especially by Massachusetts, is not a correct one," and shows that the South again took the lead "in the second period of excited controversy, from 1821 to 1830." He states, on the authority of Benjamin Lundy, that "in 1827 there were 130 abolition societies in the United States," of which 105 were in the slaveholding States (many the result of the personal labors of Lundy himself) and only four in New England and New York. It may be questioned how widespread an anti-slavery sentiment is implied in the number and respectability of the anti-slavery societies formed prior to 1800. At the very time when Jefferson was writing so hopefully of Virginia's impulse towards emancipation, John Wesley's humane Bishop Coke was preaching in that State:

"When this obnoxious subject [slavery] was omitted, he was caressed

and received with all the veneration and respect which a delegate from heaven could claim; but on other occasions, when this fatal chord was touched, it instantly vibrated discord through the congregation, and applause gave place to execrations. In some places the members of the society were disgusted, and many withdrew. While he was preaching in a barn in Virginia, on Sunday, the subject was introduced; much provocation was felt by some of the congregation, who withdrew and prepared to offer him personal violence, stimulated by a fashionable lady, who offered the mob fifty pounds in case they would seize the preacher and give him one hundred lashes. On leaving the house, he was instantly surrounded by a ferocious party, who were proceeding to put their threats into execution, but he was rescued by a magistrate and escaped in safety" (Needles, p. 19).

It would also be pertinent to enquire how far the Southern anti-slavery societies of that early period were in the hands of Quakers. Mr. Poole mentions the "Pennsylvania Society" as the first formed outside of that denomination; but Needles expressly says (p. 16): "The members of this little association were mostly or perhaps all of them members of the religious Society of Friends." The only names given by Mr. Poole in connection with the Maryland Society would justify a similar inference as to its membership.

—Such a conflagration as that which so lately destroyed a whole quarter of Boston is sure to touch every inhabitant of a great city directly or indirectly. All must wince, for the withers of none are unwrung. One man has lost a store and the goods which it contained; another, till now a millionaire, finds himself reduced to affluence, and feels as if he were beggared; another, though his property has escaped, suffers in sympathy with his friends, whose losses he feels as his own. Some there are who have lost works of art, more or less valuable in themselves, but, when least so, often most so to the owner, as connected with tender memories of which they are the visible signs. In one case which we have more especially in mind, a loss of this kind, resulting from the Boston fire, has fallen heavily on us all, as it involves the crippling of a project very dear to the originator, which, had it been carried out, would have been a source of great pleasure and interest to the public. We allude to the destruction of the collection of armor made by the late Col. T. B. Lawrence, and bequeathed to the Boston Athenæum. It was to have been eventually arranged in the new building of the Museum of Fine Arts, where a room was to have been fitted up and decorated to receive it by Mrs. Lawrence as a memorial to her husband. When the majolica, carved furniture, and Oriental armor given by Mrs. Lawrence for this purpose were removed to the Athenæum last spring from the now destroyed store in Milk Street, there was a question whether the mediæval armor should not also be taken. Unfortunately, though as it seemed at the time wisely, it was decided in the negative, and this both for want of room at the Athenæum and because there was at the moment no competent person on hand to clean and mount the suits. Bound together in an upright position, at the end of a long dimly lighted hall in the upper story of a granite building, these cast-off shells of the brave old knights were, therefore, left to meet their doom on the 9th of November. Helmet and shield and breastplate availed naught against the devouring flames, which speedily reduced the building and its contents to a blackened and mouldering heap. The Lawrence room was to have been decorated in harmony with its contents. A suit of armor complete for man and horse would have been mounted like those in the Musée d'Artillerie at Paris, or those in the splendid armory at Turin, and placed in a conspicuous position. The other suits would have been ranged at intervals along the walls, with trophies hanging above them; and the mediæval cabinets, majolica, carved chests, and panels would have been so disposed as to vary and enrich the general effect. It is to be hoped that, though it is no longer possible to carry out this scheme as originally intended, it will not be altogether abandoned. Every day we hear of other artistic losses of a painful character. One gentleman has lost his library with 10,000 engravings, mostly proof impressions, choicely bound, together with some interesting paintings and old furniture. Another has lost a number of family portraits by Copley. Another, a portfolio of original drawings by Copley, with pictures and carved furniture, the accumulation of years. Several eminent Boston artists, such as Hunt, Wild, Young, and Bellows, have lost all their pictures and sketches, and must begin life over again with such courage as they can muster. In short, artistic Boston as well as business Boston is under a heavy cloud, and, although every one bears his troubles in a manly spirit, all hearts are heavy.

—Linguist, or at least speaker of many tongues and dialects, economist, poet, politician, logician, political philosopher or philosophizing politician, editor, traveller, hymn-writer, commissioner for the negotiation of commercial treaties, philanthropist, benefactor of the Manxmen and Maltese, who both gave him services of plate as well as official thanks, an expert in currency, ambassador, Governor of Hong-Kong, minister plenipotentiary of the Hawaiian crown to all the countries of Europe, ambassador to Siam, translator of Bohemian literature, of Russian, of Magyar, of Span-

ish, of Portuguese, of Polish, of Servian, of Batavian; author of treatises on decimal coinage, on the people of Siam, on the statistics of Tuscany, on good manners for children and youth, on the commercial relations between Great Britain and France—the late Sir John Bowring, just dead at the age of eighty, was assuredly a very remarkable man, a man to be wondered at. He was born near Exeter on the 17th of October, 1792, and was of an ancient family. That he was of any university we are not informed; but whether he was or not, his multifarious acquisitions of all sorts and descriptions and his indefatigable application and activity would speedily have covered out of sight any results which so acquisitive a brain might have secured from an academic education. It happened to him, also, to fall early under the complete influence of Jeremy Bentham (of whose works he was afterwards the editor), and at whose feet he sat beside Mr. John Stuart Mill, and our own half-forgotten countryman, John Neal of Portland, who, by the bye, we suspect of entertaining exceedingly hearty and downright hatred and contempt for much that was in the character of both these gentlemen. "Cunning, timid, politic, without originality, wholly destitute of imagination," are some of the terms which our valorous and enthusiastic countryman has applied to Mr. Mill, and, if we recollect, Bowring fares very much in the same way. He has, however, been a useful as well as a busy man in his day, though probably his best chance of being remembered is that afforded him by some of the hymns of his writing or translating, which are sung "in all the churches," and which, doubtless, will echo in many a church next Sunday from Texas to Labrador. For example, the hymn beginning—

"Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are!"—

will probably be sung by many a country choir who will know nothing of the Benthamite decimal currency writer, and ambassador to Siam, and benefactor of the Manx.

DE TOCQUEVILLE'S CONVERSATIONS.*

I.

ON the 30th November, 1851, Mr. Senior wrote to De Tocqueville as follows:

"We are all looking anxiously across the Channel. Your conversations have so much prepared me for the events which have passed since May, that I seem to be looking at a play which I have read in manuscript. You did not, however, reveal the *dénouement*, but your fears as to the result of an alliance between the President and the mob have often occurred to me."

Two days after this letter was written the *coup d'état* provided the *dénouement* of the drama, and justified De Tocqueville's predictions. On the 24th of February, 1848, De Tocqueville addressed the Chamber of Deputies:

"It is supposed," said he, "that there is no danger because there is no collision. It is said that as there is no actual disturbance of the surface of society, revolution is far off. Gentlemen, allow me to tell you that I believe you deceive yourselves. Without doubt, disorder does not break out in overt acts, but it has sunk deeply into the minds of the people. Look at what is passing in the breasts of the working-classes, as yet, I own, tranquil. It is true that they are not now inflamed by purely political passions in the same degree as formerly; but do you not observe that their passions from political have become social? Do you not see gradually pervading them opinions and ideas whose object is not merely to overthrow a law, a ministry, or even a dynasty, but society itself? . . . Do you not believe that when such opinions take root, till they have become general, when they penetrate deeply into the masses, they must lead sooner or later—I know not when, I know not how, but that sooner or later they must lead to the most formidable revolution? Such is my deep conviction. I believe that at the present moment we are slumbering on a volcano. Of this I am thoroughly convinced."

The speaker's audience thought him an alarmist, but before thirty days had passed the volcano burst forth, the Chamber of Deputies was destroyed, society was thrown into the throes of a revolution, and De Tocqueville was felt by friends and foes alike to be a political prophet. His conversations even more than his books show that he possessed a kind of prophetic foresight. They suggest two enquiries. What, in the first place, was the origin and nature of this foresight? what, in the second, were the limits by which it was bounded? Both questions have an individual and a general interest, for the answer to them throws light both on the character of the greatest historical writer whom this century has produced, and on the problem how far analysis of the past will enable men to predict the future.

The source of De Tocqueville's foresight is the same as the origin of his greatness as a theorist. In both cases, his strength lies in an unrivalled capacity for critical analysis. This becomes apparent the moment you attempt to discover the distinguishing trait of his historical works. He is not exactly

* "Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with W. Nassau Senior." London: H. S. King & Co.

a great historian, for he certainly neither possessed nor supposed himself to possess the gift of painting past scenes which distinguishes such writers as Macaulay. He is not, again, one of those men who, like Sir Cornwall Lewis, exhibit a peculiar talent for weighing historical evidence, nor can it be said that De Tocqueville's knowledge, even of the portions of history which he specially studied, was anything in itself extraordinary. His acquaintance with general history does not appear to have been very large. He was well read in the histories of France and England, and towards the end of his life was accumulating stores of information about the state of French society before the Revolution. Yet it may be suspected that even on his special topics he might to the last, as far as mere knowledge of facts went, have been surpassed by German professors whose names will never be known beyond the circle of their own universities. But if De Tocqueville was in some points of view not a great historian, he was a great critic of history, and he himself exactly understood his own powers. He did not propose to himself to narrate the transactions of the past, but to explain them. All events in human history at once presented to his mind problems to be solved. To suggest solutions for these problems was the labor of his life; to have been able to point out solutions in accordance both with the facts of the case and the well-known principles of human nature, is his peculiar glory as an historical speculator.

Nothing shows more clearly his view of history and the contrast which it presents with that taken by writers whose excellence lies in narrative, than an enquiry which he asks Mr. Senior to put to Macaulay:

"In France," he writes, "and over the whole Continent the feudal system produced a caste, in England an aristocracy. How is it that the word *gentleman*, which in our language denotes a mere superiority of blood, with you is now used to express a certain social position and amount of education independent of birth, so that in two countries the same word, though the sound remains the same, has entirely changed its meaning. When did this revolution take place, how, and through what transitions? . . . If I had the honor of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Macaulay, I should venture to ask him these questions. In the excellent history which he is now publishing, he alludes to the fact, but does not explain it—but he does not try to explain it; yet there is none more pregnant or containing within it so good an explanation of the difference between the history of England and of the other feudal nations in Europe."

Whether the enquiry was ever put to Macaulay does not appear; if it was, the answer to it must, it may safely be conjectured, have been unsatisfactory. For the question marks out the exact difference between the French and English writer. Macaulay's whole object was to narrate the history of England; the aim of De Tocqueville was not to narrate events but to explain them. Where the one writer saw a mere fact, the other perceived a problem. The one is an historian, the other a critic. Now De Tocqueville applies exactly the same powers of mind to the solution of all questions affecting the conduct of mankind, and criticises the state of society under Louis Philippe, or the condition of affairs at the time of the Crimean War, in exactly the same spirit of analysis as that in which he surveys the downfall of the ancien régime or the spread of democratic feeling in the United States or in modern Europe. To say the truth, it seems in some respects to make little difference what were the objects of his criticism. He writes of the ancien régime like an observant contemporary of the courts of Louis XV. and of his successor. He speaks of the fall of Louis Philippe and of the errors of Louis Napoleon with the calmness of a man writing fifty years hence the history of the Revolution of 1848. In each case he applies certain principles to the solution of the difficulties presented by certain events submitted to him for explanation. Thus the prediction of Louis Philippe's downfall is in no sense a mere happy conjecture. Its sudden fulfilment impressed it on the public imagination; but its merit does not really depend on its immediate fulfilment. Its peculiarity lies in its being a prophecy grounded on a consideration of causes which sooner or later were certain to produce the effect foretold. It would scarcely have lost anything of its real interest even if Louis Philippe had, as he probably might have done, suppressed the movement of February 24, 1848, by a free use of grapeshot, and preserved his throne till his death. Indeed, De Tocqueville's language with regard to the Orleans dynasty affords some of the most notable instances of his calm critical sagacity. With the fall of that dynasty vanished, in his judgment, the last chance for the establishment of constitutional government in France. Its overthrow led indirectly to De Tocqueville's banishment from political life; but neither regret for a form of government which he valued perhaps even above its merits, nor bitterness engendered by the *coup d'état*, concealed from him that Louis Philippe's government, if in one sense it fell by accident, was yet foredoomed to ruin by its inherent defects.

"The great and real cause of the revolution (1848) was the detestable spirit which animated the Government during this long reign. A spirit of trickery, of baseness, and of bribery which has enervated and degraded the middle classes, destroyed their public spirit, and filled them with a selfish-

ness so blind as to induce them to separate their interests entirely from the lower classes whence they sprang. . . . This is the root of the matter; all the rest were accidents, strange and violent in themselves, I confess, but still insufficient to produce an effect."

Exactly the same calmness marks his judgment of Louis Napoleon. At first, indeed, he, like almost all men of the time, slightly underrated the President's capacity, and during the years which immediately succeeded the *coup d'état* overestimated the chances of his fall. But the later years of the Emperor's reign have shown that the contempt felt for his intellect in 1850 was certainly not more exaggerated than the admiration entertained in England at least for his supposed genius in 1860; and if De Tocqueville found it difficult to convince himself that his fellow-countrymen would endure a tyranny for more than two or three years, he yielded to the evidence of facts when they showed him that his contemporaries did not share his own love of freedom. In 1858, he seems to have acquiesced in the opinion that Louis Napoleon was a man whose great moral merits were "kindness and sympathy," who was a "faithful and attached friend," who wished "to serve all who came near him"; whilst his greatest moral fault was his ignorance of the difference between right and wrong. But De Tocqueville added to this judgment a remark, the acuteness of which no one will now doubt. "Your informant has not, perhaps, dwelt enough on his indolence; probably as he grows older the effects of his early habits tell on him; it increases; I am told it is difficult to make him attend to business."

In 1857, Mr. Senior enquired whether Louis Napoleon was likely to hold power until his death, and be succeeded by his son. "I expect both events," answered De Tocqueville. "It is impossible to deny that Louis Napoleon has shown great dexterity and tact. His system of government is detestable if we suppose the welfare of France to be his object, but skilful if its aim be merely the preservation of his own power." Here, it may be said, De Tocqueville's foresight failed him; we hardly think so. Any one who recalls the events which preceded Sedan will see that the Emperor's power was rooted more firmly than was believed either by his foes or by himself, and that a slight amount of good luck or of prudence on his part might have enabled him to fulfil De Tocqueville's prediction to the letter. Yet, if the latter expected Louis Napoleon to remain in power, he certainly exhibited a marvellous insight into the causes by which, if he fell, his fall would be produced. Again and again, in the course of these conversations, it is pointed out that the Emperor could neither prosper without war nor bring a great war to a successful termination.

"I sympathize," says De Tocqueville, "with Thiers's fears as to the result of the war. I do not believe that Napoleon himself, with all his diligence and with all his intelligence, would have thought it possible to conduct a great war to which his minister of war was opposed. A man who has no heart in his business will neglect it, or do it imperfectly. His first step would have been to dismiss —. The real prime minister is without doubt Louis Napoleon himself; but he is not a man of business, he does not understand details. He may order certain things to be done, but he will not be able to ascertain whether the proper means have been taken. He does not know, indeed, what these means are. He does not trust those who do. A war which would have tasked all the powers of Napoleon and of Napoleon's ministers and generals, is to be carried on without any master mind to direct it, or any good instruments to execute it. I fear some great disaster."

These words were spoken in 1854, and might seem disproved by two successful wars conducted by Louis Napoleon within the ten years which succeeded their utterance. But every one now perceives that De Tocqueville's prediction was profoundly true. His words, though referring to the Crimean expedition, read now like the reflections of a philosophic observer uttered a few days before the disaster of Sedan. Few persons can read them without acknowledging the speaker's foresight and recognizing its source. His predictions are the predictions of a critic whose firm hold of definite principles enables him to analyze both characters and events. Yet the most profound admirer of De Tocqueville's genius can hardly fail to perceive that his foresight was subject to certain limitations. As a statesman, his career was marked throughout by failure. He played a part, though happily but a subordinate part, in the commission of the greatest error ever committed by French diplomacy, for he sanctioned, if he did not exactly approve, the expedition to Rome; and, what is more wonderful, never appears to have seen the extent of this criminal mistake. That in some respects his insight failed is clear. The cause and extent of its failure is a subject well deserving separate consideration.

THE MAGAZINES FOR DECEMBER.

"SEEING that the little garrison was stunned by the heavy fire of the dismounted Indians, and rightly judging that now, if ever, was the proper time to charge them, Roman Nose and his band of mounted warriors, with a wild, ringing war-whoop, echoed by the women and children on the hills, started

forward. On they came, presenting even to the brave men awaiting the charge a most superb sight. Brandishing their guns, echoing back the cries of encouragement of their women and children on the surrounding hills, and confident of victory, they rode bravely and recklessly to the assault. Soon they were within the range of the rifles of their friends, and of course the dismounted Indians had to slacken their fire for fear of hitting their own warriors. This was the opportunity for the scouts, and they were not slow to seize it. 'Now,' shouted Forsyth. 'Now,' echoed Beecher, McCall, and Grover; and the scouts, springing to their knees, and casting their eyes coolly along the barrels of their rifles, opened on the advancing savages as deadly a fire as the same number of men ever yet sent forth from an equal number of rifles. Unchecked, undaunted, on dashed the warriors; steadily rang the clear, sharp reports of the rifles of the frontiersmen. Roman Nose, the chief, is seen to fall dead from his horse, then Medicine Man is killed, and for an instant the column of braves, now within ten feet of the scouts, hesitates—falters. A ringing cheer from the scouts, who perceive the effect of their well-directed fire, and the Indians begin to break and scatter in every direction, unwilling to rush to a hand-to-hand struggle with the men who, although outnumbered, yet know how to make such effective use of their rifles. A few more shots from the frontiersmen, and the Indians are forced back beyond range, and their first attack ends in defeat. Forsyth turns to Grover anxiously, and exclaims: 'Can they do better than that, Grover?' 'I have been on the Plains, General, since a boy, and never saw such a charge as that before. I think they have done their level best,' was the reply. 'All right,' responds 'Sandy'; 'then we are good for them.'

This is from an account by General Custer, writing in the *Galaxy*, of a fight which took place in September, four years ago, between eight hundred Indians and a party of fifty frontiersmen, under command of General George A. Forsyth. The whites were in a measure protected by the bodies of some of their dead horses, and also, as the fight went on, by earthworks which they managed to throw up with their case-knives and pocket-knives, after the fashion learned by our soldiers in the late war. Thus entrenched, they held the Indians at bay for seven days, some of these occupied by hard battling, until they were relieved by a detachment of regular troops sent to their aid from a distance of a hundred miles. The loss of the white men was six killed, eight disabled for life, and twelve others wounded—more than one-half the total force engaged figuring in the list of casualties. This, however, was not wonderful when we consider that the Indians were seventeen to one; that unscrupulous wretches of white men had kept these barbarians supplied with the best firearms and ammunition; and that the white man fighting Indians knows that there is absolutely no hope for him but in his own death or theirs. The story of this particular struggle General Custer tells effectively throughout, and his article will interest all his readers. We hope he may find it convenient, before his series of articles is done, to pay his respects to the Indian Ring crew. A plain tale of their infamies would be good reading for philanthropists. We suppose that the history of recent mankind nowhere shows a parallel in base swindling, in bloody outrage, to the annals of this Ring; and it is they who throw upon the soldier most of his labor and most of his odium.

Another good article in the December *Galaxy* is Mr. Gideon Welles's. The Ex-Secretary gives us a piece of history, and shows how the design to emancipate the negro made its progress in Mr. Lincoln's mind. For a long time he clung to the hope that the Border States would voluntarily set their slaves free, accepting a money compensation for them, and thus dispense him from taking up the controverted and contested plan of Federal action, "warranted alone by military necessity." The precise date when he abandoned this hope has been much discussed, says Mr. Welles, by Mr. Lincoln's historians; but in his judgment—and he had excellent means of knowing—the fact is that "no specific day or influence can be named." His last ineffectual appeal to the Border-State Congressmen he made in an interview which took place on the 12th of July, 1862, just after he had returned from McClellan's headquarters at Harrison's Landing. Those gentlemen could not be made to see their true position, and Mr. Lincoln, abandoning further care for the compromises of the Constitution, determined on fighting the devil with fire. "For more than a year after his inauguration," says Mr. Welles, "he resisted the appeals and the threats of his ultra supporters, who urged him to use the war necessity and strike the fetters from the slave. . . . But gradually the conviction dawned upon him that the cause which led to the rebellion must be removed before harmony could prevail." Many and diverse influences may, Mr. Welles thinks, have tended to confirm the President in his purpose, but the origin of his purpose was simply that under the pressure of military disaster he came to think that "to confer freedom on the four millions who were in bondage would be the most fatal blow he could strike against the rebellion." He was all ready to issue his preliminary proclamation in the first week of August, and called a Cabinet meeting, at which the rough draft of it was submitted to the Secretaries. Secretary Seward made the objection that if issued then it would be regarded as a shriek for the Administration rather than for freedom. Mr. Welles does not make it perfectly clear whether Mr. Seward meant that the October elections would be unfavorably affected by the proclamation, or whether his

notion was that military operations under Halleck and Pope, from whom much was just then expected, might make emancipation needless, but he rather indicates that the latter was Mr. Seward's basis of objection. At all events, the President forthwith put the documents into a portfolio.

"Among others who were impatient under what they considered the inexcusable neglect and inaction of the President was Horace Greeley, the editor of one of the widest circulated and most influential journals in the country. Uninformed, like others, of the purposes and contemplated movements of the Government, but filled with patriotic fervor, such as a year previous had led him, and men like him, possessed of more zeal than military knowledge, to insist that the army should, while not duly prepared, move on to Richmond, he now, on the 19th of August, addressed a letter, earnest but dictatorial in tone, to the President, admonishing him of public sentiment and of his duty. This letter was not sent through the mail as a friendly epistle, with the friendly suggestions and advice of a friend, but for some reason, good or bad, was published in the *New York Tribune*."

Everybody will recollect the President's reply to this letter, and it is well to recollect also—that he could not say—that at the time of writing it he had already prepared the proclamation desired and demanded. The next Cabinet meeting in relation to the subject was held on the 20th of September, and on that occasion every one of the Secretaries, except Mr. Montgomery Blair, was in favor of promulgating the provisional decree. Mr. Blair, although he approved of the principle of the measure, thought the time inopportune, as he feared its effect on the Border States, and he placed his objections on file. It is here related that at this memorable meeting, Mr. Lincoln told his advisers that he had taken counsel of Providence in reference to the business in hand, and had made a vow to regard a favorable event of the impending battle of Antietam, as we make out, as the Divine approval of the new policy. Mr. Bates was urgent for the deportation of the freedmen, and Mr. Welles glances at "a speculating operation" in the shape of a scheme for colonizing our negroes in Central America, and he appears to have been instrumental in killing it. On the 30th and 31st of December, the proclamation was finally revised, Mr. Seward making two or three mere verbal changes, and Mr. Chase suggesting "the felicitous closing paragraph" which asserts the sincerity of the Executive and invokes the considerate judgment of mankind. On the 1st of January, 1863, as all the world now knows, the paper was signed and published.

Mr. De Forrest's story called "The Wetherel Affair" opens takingly, and promises to be one of the cleverest things which this writer has done. It will be a hardened novel-reader who shall not find this story bright and fresh. Good, too, is Mr. John Durand's "French Scenes, Customs, and Characters," and readable is Mr. Justin McCarthy's "Gossip" about Lord Westbury, Sir Alexander Cockburn, and other "Great English Lawyers," though perhaps he might have well bethought himself that to readers of the *Galaxy* the anecdotes and stories about these men of whom he writes would all be new, however stale in London club-rooms.

Mr. Durand points out how much easier, more reasonable, and more civilized is daily life in Paris than in our American cities, and he explains by a number of particular instances "that wonderful adjustment of rights and duties which makes the French social scheme a marvel to all who will take the trouble to analyze it. Compare, for example, with the common incidents of Mr. Morton's "best civil service in the world" this incident: Mr. Durand one day received a letter regularly prepaid at home, but on which the French post-office demanded sixty-four sous as a double rate on a double letter, the American postage going for nothing. Inexperienced in such matters, he took the letter to the nearest post-office bureau and asked to have the excessive charge accounted for. The clerk examined the letter, weighed it, and found it just on the balance of a double letter, and therefore subject to the amount charged. "You are aware, monsieur," said he, "that when a letter is insufficiently paid in America, the stamp used goes for nothing here, and that the postage is double rates according to law. This letter is exactly on the balance, and probably made a double one by the weight of the stamps put upon it. You had better send it to the *Directeur des Postes*, who will settle the matter." Thanking the clerk for his polite explanation, Mr. Durand wrote a note to the official named, and in a few days received a note containing an elaborate explanation of the facts and concluding as follows: "All I can do under the circumstances is to request the Post-Office Department of the United States to authorize me to reimburse you the value of the stamp uselessly employed by your correspondent in the postage of the said letter. I will communicate to you the result of the proceeding. Accept, monsieur, the assurance of my distinguished consideration, etc., etc." Mr. Durand paid no further attention to the matter except to be amused for a moment at the idea of two governments corresponding about fifteen cents; but at the end of a month he is still further amused by finding that the *Directeur des Postes* has "the honor to transmit a warrant for the reimbursement of seventy-five centimes, the value of postage stamps," etc., etc. Mr. Durand rightly enough regards this, trivial as it was, as a significant

sign of the high civility of the French capital; and perhaps might be justified in regarding his feeling of amusement at it as significant of the lack of such perfection of civilization in our American cities. When we get so that we care for the seventy-five centime sums; when we get to be so numerous as to be obliged to take thought to secure all possible advantages, we shall neither suffer our Tweeds nor our Fairs nor many another person and thing whom in our strength and wealth we heedlessly suffer now. The gods sell their gifts, and we do have to pay a price for living in a country where everybody is allowed to do that which is good in his own eyes, because everybody has so much room to wax fat and kick that no one cares to look sharply after these friction-saving arts and devices which elsewhere are a necessity. The thing has its good as well as its bad side, and perhaps we are all too much inclined to fasten our attention upon the bad; or at least always upon one to the exclusion of the other.

Some thoughtful verses by Miss A. M. Wellington are not a little unlike the usual magazine poetry. The subject we may speak of as being better than the treatment—the merely mechanical treatment, that is to say. Great poets have made blank verse with the fault of having an insignificant and weak word at the end of the verse to receive the stress of the voice and so produce an effect unpleasant in all ways, notably one great poet has done so, and perhaps on this account, obvious as the error is, it may be worth while to say a word on the point to a writer who shows the capabilities of this one.

"Saved from the Mormons," we regret to say, we have not faith to receive as gospel truth.

First and last, we have read, we suppose, some hundreds of descriptions of Rocky Mountain scenery, but we have not read any so provocative of a desire to wander in that region as an illustrated article in the new *Harper's*. Not that it is a specially well prepared article either; or rather, not that it is very highly finished, but the writer makes you feel the scenery and breathe the air of the region described.

Other illustrated articles are about Malta; the Library of Congress; the latest edition of Marco Polo; some chapters of Miss Thackeray's "Old Kensington"; the first part of an endeavor at reconstructing the daily life of the ancient Romans; and three chapters of Wilkie Collins's new novel, "The New Magdalen." Mr. Charles Reade's story, "A Simpleton," we do not find very striking, and have ceased reading it till we shall get it all together; but his publishers promise a new one, which will turn upon the decision of an Irish *cause célèbre* of the last century, and which bids fair to be a fine novel, not of his very best sort, but of a very good sort nevertheless.

A love story, which we confess is not of herculean strength, is prettily told by Francis M. Peard, who exhibits a refinement unusual among the writers in *Harper's* of this kind of stories, which are a regular manufacture. Very many of its products have appeared to be the work of the farmer's daughter who might better have been down in the kitchen or out walking than up in the north chamber cultivating literature. Some, indeed, have been worse than this, and such as to make these seem very well worth the space they have filled; but Miss Peard's, or Mrs. Peard's, is a great deal preferable to either.

The "Easy Chair" talks of the recent festival at Plymouth Church in Brooklyn; of the English lecturers; of the late Julian Fawe, a gracious youth, of whom, however, we hear most from a friend or two whose judgment would be likely to be kind rather than clear; and, finally, of a children's party, at which the children were bedizened with disgraceful and cruel extravagance. The latter evil we suppose to be a real evil, and a very unfortunate one; but we take it to be somewhat exaggerated in common speech. It is as natural for a mother, be she ever so sensible and reasonable, to take delight in the beautiful apparelling of her children as for the child itself to dress her doll in gorgeous array; and once in so often the mother will overdo it. Too often even once may be; but not all the boys and girls who are allowed to be seen at these rather senseless and pernicious "children's hops" are going to be brainless fops and flirts. The mud pie will never fail from among men.

"The Fight of a Man with a Railroad," which opens the December *Atlantic*, relates a long legal battle fought by Mr. John A. Coleman of Providence against the New York and New Haven Railroad Company in the Massachusetts courts. It is sure of sympathetic perusal, for that railroad corporations are tyrannical the general public fully believes, as juries are very apt to show whenever an individual brings suit. Mr. Coleman's case was this: Three years ago, when going from New York to Providence, he had in his possession, left over from a previous journey, a ticket-coupon good for a passage from New Haven to New York. This, as he believed, ought to be good for a passage from New York to New Haven. The conductor of the train was of a contradictory belief, and Mr. Coleman, after a

pretty determined resistance, was removed from the train at Stamford, and that with such violence that he was very seriously injured. For these injuries he brought his suit, and the jury awarded him damages. The railroad company fought him tooth and nail, in the spirit indicated by this remark of one of its officials, with which Mr. Coleman prefaces his article: "The road has no personal animosity against you, Mr. Coleman; but you represent the public; and the road is determined to make it so terrible for the public to fight it, right or wrong, that they will stop it. We are not going to be attacked in this way." But after four years of litigation and five trials Mr. Coleman comes out victorious with the verdict of the first jury confirmed. That Mr. Coleman's view of the law as regards his particular case (outside the brutality of the assault made upon him) is a sound one, we should not like to say. Circumstances may easily be conceived of under which it might be very unfair and inexpedient that a ticket good on a certain day for passage over a certain distance from west to east, should at any and all times thereafter be equally good for the same distance from east to west. But there can be no doubt that our railroad corporations and their employees are often the hard masters of the public, instead of the courteous servants that they ought to be. Mr. Coleman's article will do good in keeping at the right heat a public feeling which is becoming very healthily warm.

Nothing else in this number of the *Atlantic* calls for much remark except the painful realism of the sketch called "Shaker John" and the scientific editor's remarks on the Schoeppe trial. These are of interest to those wise heads who, after a conflict between an ignoramus and a man of science who knows his business, may always be depended on to enquire, "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?" and to doubt the existence of experts and the value of their testimony. With the art critic we see that we have on our hands a most deadly and ferocious quarrel, to which we shall shortly attend, to the great discomfiture and shame, as we trust, of the opposing critic. Meantime we will call his attention to the fact, already stated by us, that the criticisms upon Mr. Ward's work, made in a journal called the *Fine Arts*, were not made by the *Nation's* critic. The two criticisms are in no possible way or manner connected with each other, and wilfully connecting them—in spite of information received that to do so was to make an error—has only the result of causing a certain portion of the *Atlantic* critic's latest article to fall useless to the ground.

"A Comedy of Terrors" comes to a too late end with this twelfth part, in which, by the way, the author has the coolness to speak of "an amazing coincidence," as if the story had not been from the beginning a mass of bald impossibilities. They have been unrelieved, too, by anything of thought, or wit, or fun, or good feeling, or character drawing, or anything else that could redeem its nonsense or save its reader from a certain shame that such things could be either written or read.

"The Poet at the Breakfast Table" also is ended in this number. Mr. Parton has his say about Alexander Hamilton, who, as he knows, was made wholly in vain, and whom he cordially detests; Mr. De Forrest makes a coarse but not wholly ineffective caricature of a Connecticut lobbyist; there is a denunciatory article on our methods of ornamentation in house building and furnishing, and the usual amount of book-noticing.

We commend to the readers of *Lippincott's* Dr. Weir Mitchell's essay, entitled "Nurse and Patient"—a discussion of a most important relation, which we commend particularly to the attention of women, unmarried or widowed. The well-illustrated paper of Peruvian travel, "Searching for the Quinine Plant," is also worth attention. "The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton" are brought to a close in Edinburgh, and Miss Bell, we take pleasure in announcing, becomes the beautiful bride of the highly glorified and anti-Gallican young Uhlan—a Prussian such as is only born, we suspect and fear, in lands foreign to Prussia, and since novelists and other people took sides for and against the French in the late Franco-Germanic war.

Scribner's is very full of matter of the usual kind, and some of a kind a little unusual for *Scribner's*, but not necessarily the worse on that account. Of this latter sort is Mr. M. D. Conway's "Demons of the Shadow," which deals with the genesis of the Devil and all his hosts. A Mr. J. Hotchkiss writes about the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, and takes us interestingly through a large and interesting part of Virginia. It may literally take some of us through or to Virginia, for we should think articles of this sort might do much to encourage immigration along the line of the described railroad.

Mr. Robert Buchanan, whose business it appears to have become to put into verse whatever is momentarily attracting the attention of the public, has been utilizing the Irish question, and in a poem called "Murtough"—which treats of the hanging of a "Boy"—he surpasses even himself in false pathos and commonplace thought. As for the verse and diction, most Englishmen and Scotchmen who have undertaken the imitation of Irish dialects—most of them, by the bye, being ignorant that there are more dialects than one—have succeeded in making themselves a spectacle to gods and men; but

Mr. Buchanan, when he comes, slaughters and exterminates patience once for all and dashes forbearance into flinders.

Appleton's *Popular Science Monthly* is, as usual, principally made up of extracts from foreign journals. The quality of the articles not credited to such sources does not encourage the hope that the requisite quantity and quality of matter could be obtained in any other way. But we should suppose that by a careful and sufficiently free expenditure of money the department of original matter might be secured from our own scientific men to make this department of it equal to the eclectic portion, which is well managed and readable. We know the difficulty of inducing hard-worked American scholars to write, but it can be done. It is a curious fact that any one desiring popularized accounts of the works of our scientific men, or the proceedings of our scientific societies, will have to seek for them in European publications. We have had little or nothing to correspond to the journals of popular science which are so numerous in England, France, and Germany, and we must now warn any one who takes the *Popular Science Monthly* with the idea of finding accounts of the progress of science in America and of the researches of American men of science to compare in point of fulness and ability with those in *Nature*, that he will be disappointed.

The Human Race. By Louis Figuier. Illustrated with 243 engravings on wood and 8 chromolithographs. (New York: D. Appleton & Co. pp. 548.)—The title-page of this work does not credit the prolific M. Louis Figuier with his antecedent labors. It may be well to call the roll of his book achievements before we examine specially "The Human Race," the last in time, and it is to be hoped in fact, of this remarkable series. In any enterprising book-store may be seen the following array of octavo volumes, each illustrated with from two hundred to five hundred engravings, and labelled with the now formidable name of Louis Figuier, namely: "The World Before the Deluge," "The Ocean World," "The Insect World," "The Vegetable World," "Earth and Sea," "Reptiles and Birds," "The Mammalia," "Primitive Man," and "The Human Race"—nine huge volumes. "The To-morrow of Death" not having attained to the stature of an octavo does not appear among them, but it will be produced, on call, as a genuine production of the same inexhaustible and irrepressible "Louis Figuier."

Who is this scientific Hercules? we ask in some amazement—the inventor of this new machine for turning off science by the yard-stick? Is he a myth, or some veritable Frenchman; or, which seems more probable than either, the shadow of an organized junta of book-makers, with fair libraries to draw upon, and satisfactory connections with great publishing houses in Paris, London, and New York to push the results of the manufacture?

We make haste to say that we do not believe in M. Figuier nor in his methods of treating the serious and hard-won facts of science. We even doubt the existence of this pretended author, the reputed father of these sensational works. Science cannot be furnished, cord measure, by a single brain, nor even compilations of universal science; whence our conjecture of a conspiracy of book-makers and book-publishers to seize and settle the sum and substance of human knowledge, and to stamp it, in the name of M. Figuier, upon the French, English, and American minds. It must have required such a combination of writers and publishers first to make and then to float the series, which has resulted in bringing upon us this Figuerian deluge. Pursuing this lead a step further: if sensational novels are discredited, what shall be said of sensational treatises upon scientific subjects? Does it indicate a leprosy among the publishers—a rottenness in the quest of gain? These productions cannot be classed among works of science. Whilst they are compilations from works of acknowledged reputation, they are interlarded with observations unwarranted by the facts, and with speculations embodying the most glaring absurdities. As a whole, they are desecrations of science. Knowledge, unfortunately, must follow the law of merchandise in reaching mankind; but the publisher who endorses and vends a spurious article, knowing it to be such, under a genuine brand, is chargeable with—a want of proper respect for the public.

The work on "The Human Race" requires but a brief notice. It cannot be excepted from the foregoing remarks. In a scientific sense, it is of no value; and besides this, it is an extremely superficial presentation of a great subject. As an attempt at pictorial ethnology, the engravings are too coarse and characterless to fix particular types of men. Even as a "Tour du Monde" it furnishes but a limited amount of not well selected general information. In the first and second chapters the scientific expositions are given. M. Figuier believes in the permanence of species (p. 15) and in the special creation of man (p. 8); and thus, by two triumphant acts of faith, he frees his subject at once from all troublesome complications. By a simple declaration he settles peremptorily the question of questions in modern science. Neither the great doctrine of evolution, nor the more special and definite

Darwinian theory, has ruffled the meditations or disturbed the placid wisdom of our science-monger. He proceeds to found his classification of mankind upon the color of the skin, a basis long since abandoned as untenable, and only suggested in the earliest stages of the science of anthropology. "Around the table-lands of Asia," he remarks, "are found the three organic and fundamental types of man, that is to say, the white, the yellow, and the black" (p. 9). To these he adds the brown and the red. But he does not hesitate to violate his fundamental canon of classification whenever it becomes more convenient to place a white stock in a yellow family, or a brown in a red. In forming his family groups linguistic disconnection presents no obstacle. A philologist will be edified to discover the Finns and the Magyars in his Slavonian family (p. 113), and perhaps be startled by the information that the Jews, that remarkable historical race, have "an affinity with the Semitic family" (p. 184).

But we will not pursue further the ungracious task of finding fault with a writer who, by attempting too much, has come short in so many particulars. It is but just to say that M. Figuier writes in a genial spirit, and that his volumes are not without valuable suggestions of his own. We will venture the further remark, that if these works were emaculated of their more elements of Figuerism by some competent editor, and a plain and simple theory or exposition of the facts were substituted, so that they might be republished, under proper titles, as contributions of scientific information compiled from the works of eminent authors, they would serve a highly useful purpose in spreading abroad, in a popular form, a large amount of valuable knowledge.

Finally, we wish to except from these remarks, in a limited sense, the work on "Primitive Man," which we consider, in the main, an excellent treatise. The facts embodied have but an indirect relation to primitive man—therefore the title is a misnomer—but the work contains the most comprehensive presentation yet made in a single volume of the investigations in Belgium, Holland, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, and Denmark of the bone-caves and other repositories of human and animal remains belonging to the prehistorical period. The facts collected cover the period of barbarism, and extend back some distance into the period of savagery; but not far enough to win a glimpse of primitive man. The Neanderthal skull approaches the nearest to that yet very distant man; but M. Figuier, with the strange fatality which beclouds his genius, failed to recognize its primitive characteristics. His ideal of primitive man is evidently a Greek of the magnificent cranial development of Euripides; or, at the very least, a Greek of the Homeric period. He is plainly irreclaimable.

The Romance of American History. Early Annals. By M. Schele De Vere. (New York: G. P. Putnam & Sons. 1872. 12mo, pp. 254.)—Prof. De Vere has made a very agreeable little book, consisting of seven independent chapters of just the character of magazine articles. Here are collected, under their several heads, most of the romantic incidents of our early history, arranged and told with a good deal of literary skill. There are some evidences, especially in the early chapters, of "reading up" for the purpose of writing; these chapters contain a good deal of fragmentary and ill-digested matter, which a person more at home in the subject would have known better how to dispose of. The later chapters are, from a literary point of view, almost without exception good, easy, and pleasant reading. We will particularly commend the account of Lord Fairfax, of King Carter, and of the colonization of New Sweden. History, however, is not the right field for our author; his mind is too inaccurate, and he has too little notion of what is meant by historical evidence. Or, if he undertakes to write historical narratives, which he certainly does very well, he should enter into partnership with some more accurate student who should be responsible for his facts. Jamestown is called, p. 193, "the second town ever built on this continent"—Santa Fé (1582) being forgotten. Cavendish is spoken of, p. 148, as "the first bold mariner that ever sailed around the globe." Marietta is said, p. 130, to have been named, in 1783, "in honor of poor Marie Antoinette, whose fate just then excited universal sympathy in all feeling hearts"—the French Revolution began the next year. The author of "The Wonder Working Providence" is called, p. 28, "Rev. Mr. Johnson," instead of Capt. Edward Johnson. There is curious confusion, p. 51, between the Lenni-Lenape, the Illinois, and the Miamis, where we read of the Illinois: "The tribe was known as Miamis to the French, and as Delawares to the English; but among themselves they permitted no other designation but *Lenoré-Lenapé*"—in the later chapters the name is spelt correctly.

The fondness of the author for sounding phrases, while it mars his style, is the source of some inaccuracies. Thus, p. 41, Marquette, at the mouth of the Mesconsin (Wisconsin) River found "a chain of lofty mountains"—which we are to suppose have since been swallowed up by an earthquake or washed into the Gulf of Mexico by the turbulent Mississippi. Maple

sugar, the French colonists found, p. 122, could only be made "in mid-winter." Captain John Smith, according to the original account, was surrounded by "more than two hundred" Indians, when about to be executed; on p. 79 of this book he was "well guarded by a thousand watchful eyes." Here are five hundred already, but on the next page the number is doubled, for "a low, subdued cry of amazement escapes from a thousand wrought-up hearts." This is "fine writing," and it well illustrates Mr. De Vere's faults both as a writer and a historian.

The entire chapter entitled "Our First Romance," from which the above is taken, is characterized by this same inflated style, as if the author felt that he had a bad case and were doing his best to dress it up. We are hardly willing, however, to attribute his ramping of the exploded story of Pocahontas to an intentional disregard of truth, but rather to a defective appreciation of the weight of evidence. His tone of mind is essentially romantic in dealing with historical questions. He enjoys such stories as this, and cares more to believe that they are true than to examine their truth in the light of evidence. Probably, too, his mind lacks the power of weighing impartially against each other the negative testimony of 1608 and the positive testimony of 1624, and seeing that the former outweighs the latter. No doubt, as an adopted citizen of Virginia, he would like to prove the story true; but it would unquestionably be the same with the fable of William Tell. Just so, he gives the Indians the credit of the mounds, which were certainly built by an earlier race.

There are many misprints, especially in the first part of the book, where, for instance, *Rivière* is always spelt *Rivieré*. On p. 55, *y* should undoubtedly be *r*; p. 155, 1697 should be 1673; p. 136, Tabontes should be Taborites; p. 125, we cannot conceive what should stand instead of 1674.

Fine Arts.

THE "VENUS" OF MELOS.

AS the one recognizable and indisputable good the world has derived from the bombardment of Paris, we may reckon the discovery of the distortion practised on the so-called Venus of Melos by the impertinent self-sufficiency of the former curators of the Louvre when this peerless statue was set up under Gallic protection. It is well known that the torso was in two pieces originally, or separated for portability in the hiding of it, and when the Frenchman set it up he could not resist the temptation to better the Greek, and so inserted a thin wedge between the two parts, giving the figure an exaggerated leaning over towards its right and forwards, which perhaps expressed better what he thought it was meant to express. When the statue was removed for hiding from the Prussians, it was separated again, and on reuniting it the wedge was left out, restoring the figure to its original pose. This is slightly more thrown back and more upright in the lateral sense, a modification which gives new force to the hypothesis originally, if I mistake not, advanced by Millingen, that she held a shield (tablet?) on which there might be an inscription.

What has kept the statue in the class of Venuses so long? I can only conceive the reason to be that most students of the antique have always regarded the Venus as the supreme type of beauty to the Greek mind, and that as the Melos statue was the highest example of beauty known, it must be a Venus. But it is opposed not only to the analogies of Greek art but to the temper of the Greek, to whom Venus was beauty without the higher intellectual attributes he gave to Minerva, Juno, and even Diana, which, differing in their qualities, are always consistent in their form. No Juno can ever be mistaken for a Minerva, or Minerva for a Diana, and if we confuse the type of the Venus, it is mainly because we do not perceive that there is another type still which is not Minerva as commonly received, and still less like all the palpable Venuses—types purely of sexual perfection and attractiveness, viz.: the Victory, or properly speaking, the Minerva-Victory, "Athene-Nike," to whom the beautiful little Ionic temple on the Acropolis of Athens was dedicated, and in the centre of which was erected a statue of the wingless Victory—Minerva-Victory being wingless that she might never quit Athens. If any one will take the trouble to compare the Melos statue with the fragments of Victories from this temple (of which I have given the example most like this statue in my Album of the Acropolis), he will see that not only is the general type the same, but the artistic feeling is the same—the epoch of art and the evident use. But these reliefs are all winged, and formed part of a balustrade round the entrance to the temple in the centre of which stood the Wingless.

My impression has always been, since seeing these fragments at Athens, that the Melos statue was a Victory, and, I believe, the identical statue which once stood in this temple. She is engaged in writing the names of those

who fell in the struggle with the Persians, a struggle whose incidents are recorded in the frieze of the temple, while the Victories of the balustrade are sacrificing, offering oblations, etc., and one, the world-known draped figure, is taking off her sandals after her flight thither.

It happened in one of my cruises in the Levant that I put into the harbor of Melos for a stormy spell, and waited there several days. I made then the acquaintance of the son of the man who discovered the statue, and he went with me to show me the spot where it was found, not buried in a field and turned up by a plow, but walled in a niche, with arms and all its parts, carefully concealed by some devout lover of it. The finder at once sent word to the French Minister at Constantinople, who after some delay sent a frigate to secure it. Arriving at Melos, the Frenchman found that the commander of a Turkish ship which had come to the island had taken arbitrary possession of it, and it was by an equally arbitrary application of *force majeure* that the Frenchman took it under his protection; but in the struggle the arms, which were detached when found, were left in the hold of the Turk or thrown overboard, and never to be found again.

The niche in which it was found was close to the theatre of Melos, a never-finished work of the Roman Empire. If my conjecture as to the identity of the statue be true, it might have been carried from Athens to Melos while the original sanctuary was in danger from invasion, and hidden, as the magnificent bronze Hercules of the Vatican was, either before the theatre was built or (which seems to me more probable) when the attack of the barbarians which arrested the construction of the temple was impending, it having been carried away from Athens to decorate an imperial seat or public work.

There are no indications of a temple having ever stood near the spot, and a work of so great beauty and of an epoch so far anterior to the theatre could never have been in a place of no local importance or religious interest. Its style, its close sympathy with the Victories, and its having no connection with any tradition or local worship of Melos, are all circumstances which confirm my conjecture. Melos was a favorite "watering-place" under the Empire, and Athens not far away. It must, as it seems to me, have been carried there for safety and buried by the Athenians, or taken by the Romans as an ornament for their theatre, and like the Hercules (also in the vicinity of the theatre) buried some time when invasion was menaced, exactly as, following its imperial destiny, it was buried at its new seat when the Prussians came to menace its possession; for neither Turk nor Roman community could ever have been in the slightest ignorance of the true value and incomparable beauty of the work. Whoever had it must have dreaded its loss, and hid it as the Parisians did.

My Melosian friend was, when I was there, French Consul, as his father had been before him, and I presume he is still there in the same capacity, as all civilized nations except our own regard their representatives as the better for having been in one place long enough to know their business, and I suppose any one may now go to Melos and see the place where the statue was found as I saw it.

W. J. STILLMAN.

THE PICTURES AT THE ACADEMY OF DESIGN.

THERE are some singular qualities about the exhibition at the Academy. An enormous rout of pictures, approaching four hundred in number, conquering our respect by sheer force of mass, yet not insignificant in detail or mean in quality, collected on speculation at a time when such commodities have made a sudden and marked leap in value, argues, we suppose, a "feeling of confidence" in the art commerce of this country. The collection is to be sold at vendue, and the admission-fee is only a protection against thronging the gallery, being not more than half of what the pictures, as an exhibition, would easily bear. Mr. Derby, who represents the enterprise, has collected in a spirit very different from that of his last exclusive and very choice importation. There are this year no Venuses by Cabanel, nor any *hors d'œuvre* by Breton, Rousseau, Troyon, or Leya. Instead, there are repeated daintinesses by De Jonghe, and Dillens, and Perrault, and Bakalowiec, all aimed with fatal knowingness straight at the parlor of Carlyle's gig-man. It is evident that multitudes of this impressionable type of being are to be brought in, fired with the mutual flame, and sent away with costume studies that they do not understand, and portraits of lorettes that their wives will consider "improper." The titles, whether those produced from the inner consciousness of Mr. Derby, or those painted in fat black London letters on the frames, and attributable to Mr. Everard (part owner of the collection), are meant to sink into the heart of the English or American burgher, and differ from the reserve and good taste of French nomenclature; a gay head by Merle is labelled "Smiling at Me," and the Spanish study by Portaels thrills the marrow of Philistia with the horrid caption, "I will be Revenged." These literary improvements are of slight moment, but it is not agreeable to find that

the makers of boudoir pictures are changing their style, with an obvious eye to the American and English demand, and turning out work that is all-over Birmingham. A costume-picture may be a very good work of art, meeting most of the requirements, and conquering most of the difficulties, of serious painting. But we observe, with a displeased and almost a compassionate regret, that clever men like De Jonghe and Bakalowicz are stultifying themselves with work that is simply bad, painting draperies of tin and dismembered lay-figures in sad quantity. A short engagement with some practical, cross, exacting editor of a French *Journal des Modes* would do a world of good to these spoilt and heedless costumers. The paucity or indolence of their invention, too, and their tendency to lean on the shoulders of more thoughtful artists, is a discouraging trait; for instance, since the "Salome" of Regnault, which was a study of yellows with a background of golden drapery, every one seems to be painting yellow backgrounds. At Knoedler's, we notice a lady with a page kissing her hand, the figures in the style of Willems, the distance of the most crude and aggressive ochre; in the present collection, De Jonghe's lady in black velvet, with child and parrot, is modelled upon flat-yellow damask; and even Bertrand, coming forward with his spiritual and diaphanous Marguerites and Ophelias, relieves the beauteous lunacy of Denmark against a parcel of yellow somewhat in the tone of a washer-woman's petticoat. All these crudities and plagiarisms indicate a want of that deep-seated respect for the intellects of their patrons which it is desirable to keep alive in the bosoms of the versatile and volatile painters of France.

The curiosities and salient points of the Derby-Everard collection are soon got over. Perhaps one of the most agreeable surprises to many connoisseurs is the brace of pictures by Richard Burnier, of Düsseldorf, who exhibits cattle, and coast and field scenery, of very high quality, with a secret of light hardly caught by any artist since the death of Troyon. This landscapist, though new to many visitors, is not quite unknown in this country, Mr. Claghorn having long possessed one of his coast scenes of great merit. The figures in M. Burnier's scenes are large and broad, their surfaces sharing in the general motive of light and shade, not too much studied out in detail, and admirably massed; his soft play of light, without trick or forcing, is wonderful. Alma Tadema, more of an antiquarian than an artist, exhibits one small composition which certainly strikes the eye as if a window had been opened into antiquity. It is the flag end of an ancient banquet, with fruits and objects of vertu on the table, and an old man musing on his couch like Socrates at the end of Plato's *Banquet*. A younger guest lies on his cushions in a still more sybaritic manner, and a music-girl plays on her flutes for the edification of the two. The picture is not remarkable artistically, but as a bit of reconstructive scholarship it may be better than several cabinets in the Naples Museum, and it is quite credible how England, having now got her South Kensington collections together, should send for such an antiquary as Tadema to live with her and be her archaeological love. The example of Meissonier is very satisfactory and impeccable, exciting that dry

admiration quite unmixed with enthusiasm which is the author's proper meed, and indeed not quite approachable by any Fortuny, or Detaille, or Zampois in its own narrow line; those who have tired of Meissonier and clamor for "feeling" may renew their vows before this work of a man who struck out a new style, and was great in his own manner, before they and their tastes and their new favorites were formed. Willems shows a specimen of really tender painting, in soft, rich drapery, and tender flesh; it is not a new work, and that is its advantage, for he will probably never again paint with the same conscience, and silvery, sculptural sentiment. Tony Robert Fleury, a rare visitor to these shores, shows a bust-picture of a girl not very remarkable, and recalling but little of the energy and national sentiment of his fine scene from the Polish insurrection. Charles Louis Müller, so well known by his great theatrical "Last Roll-call in the Reign of Terror," contributes a couple of life-sized Oriental subjects, and a girl-group in rather Bacchanalian postures, showing creditably his studious and well-preserved and formal excellence. Merle and Bouguereau crowd each other with almost a catalogue of specimens. By Merle there is the first study of his "Maniac," a black, unrelieved, decidedly unpleasant study of misery; Bouguereau's little Italian, receiving a lesson on the pipe from his brother pifferaro, is dainty and careful, and a breath out of his happiest spring-time. Among the conspicuous pictures is an imposing work by Mouchot, "The Sortie of the Grand Council," painted somewhat in the manner of Hamman, and exhibiting a scene of gracious pomp in the courtyard of the Doge's Palace and along the stately descent of the Staircase of the Giants. Gallait, whom a decade ago we used to swear by, is probably less popular than he was, but the baby in his Rubensish domestic group is at least brilliant, flesh-like, *ondoyant*, and pictorial. Of genre pictures there is a scene with a *Coquette Bretonne* that would hardly be taken for an American work, so impressed is it with the most solid lessons of European study; although the artist's hand seems a little heavy for his subject, and demands to be seen, we think, in graver and larger work, yet the picture we speak of is admirable for sheer massive strength. It is by Mr. Robert Wylie, of America and Paris, recipient of a medal at the last salon, and certainly deserving that rare honor. We must not omit to state that the enormous pastels by Maréchal, "Galileo," and "Columbus," are again displayed by Mr. Derby, this time in a small inside room of the Academy, among pictorial atrocities that would argue by their presence some very unconventional views on the business of picture-hanging. These crayons are strange and impressive. The subjects seem to contradict the very genius of pastel, and are—especially that of the Columbus, floating in chains on the ocean he was the first to chain—noble in the extreme. The postures are horizontal, and, with their affectation of what is tortuous and involved, seem to challenge some comparison with Michael Angelo. There is none of the simplicity of severe art, but there is, especially in the "Galileo," an elevation and originality of rare order.

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